orange

—future—

story and art by

ICHIGO TAKANO

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orange

ICHIGO TAKANO presents

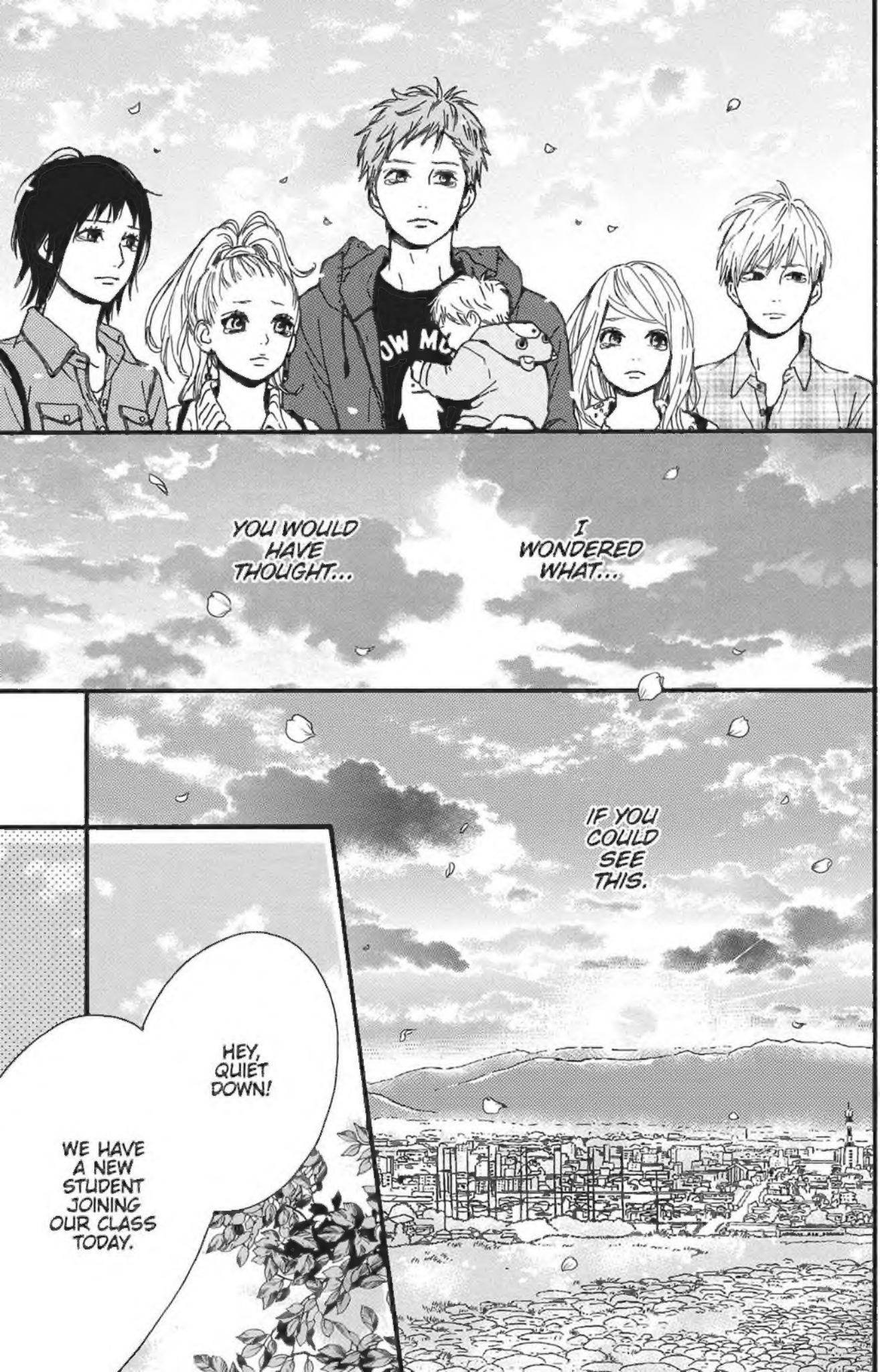
6

-future-

the sixth volume

orange
—future—

I WANTED TO SHOW YOU.


YOU WOULD HAVE THOUGHT...
I WONDERED WHAT...
IF YOU COULD SEE THIS.
HEY, QUIET DOWN!
WE HAVE A NEW STUDENT JOINING OUR CLASS TODAY.

THIS IS NARUSE KAKERU-KUN.
WELL THEN, TAKE THE SEAT NEXT TO TAKAMIYA,
IN THE BACK THERE.
OKAY...
SCRAPE
NARUSE...

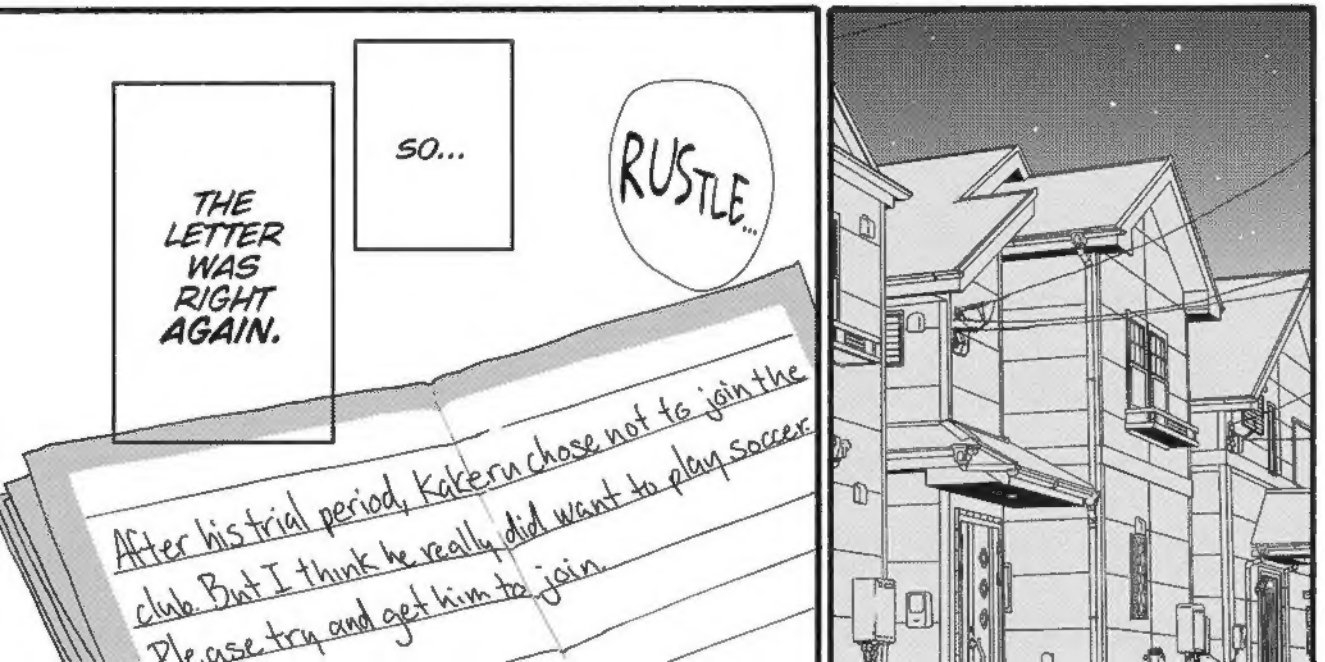
SORRY, SUWA.
IT LOOKS LIKE I CAN'T JOIN THE SOCCER CLUB AFTER ALL.
NO, "KAKERU-KUN."
That's not okay!!
JOLT
.....?

WHY THE HELL NOT?!
DIDN'T YOU LIKE YOUR TRIAL PERIOD WITH THE CLUB?!
I THOUGHT YOU LOVED SOCCER!
PLEASE, MAN! WE NEED YOU!
BUT...

ALL RIGHT!
I'LL DO IT.
I'LL JOIN THE SOCCER CLUB.
No, no, no, no, no, hooooo!!
If you don't join, I'll quit!!
WHOA ...!
S-SUWA ...!
I wanna play soccer with yoooo-oou!

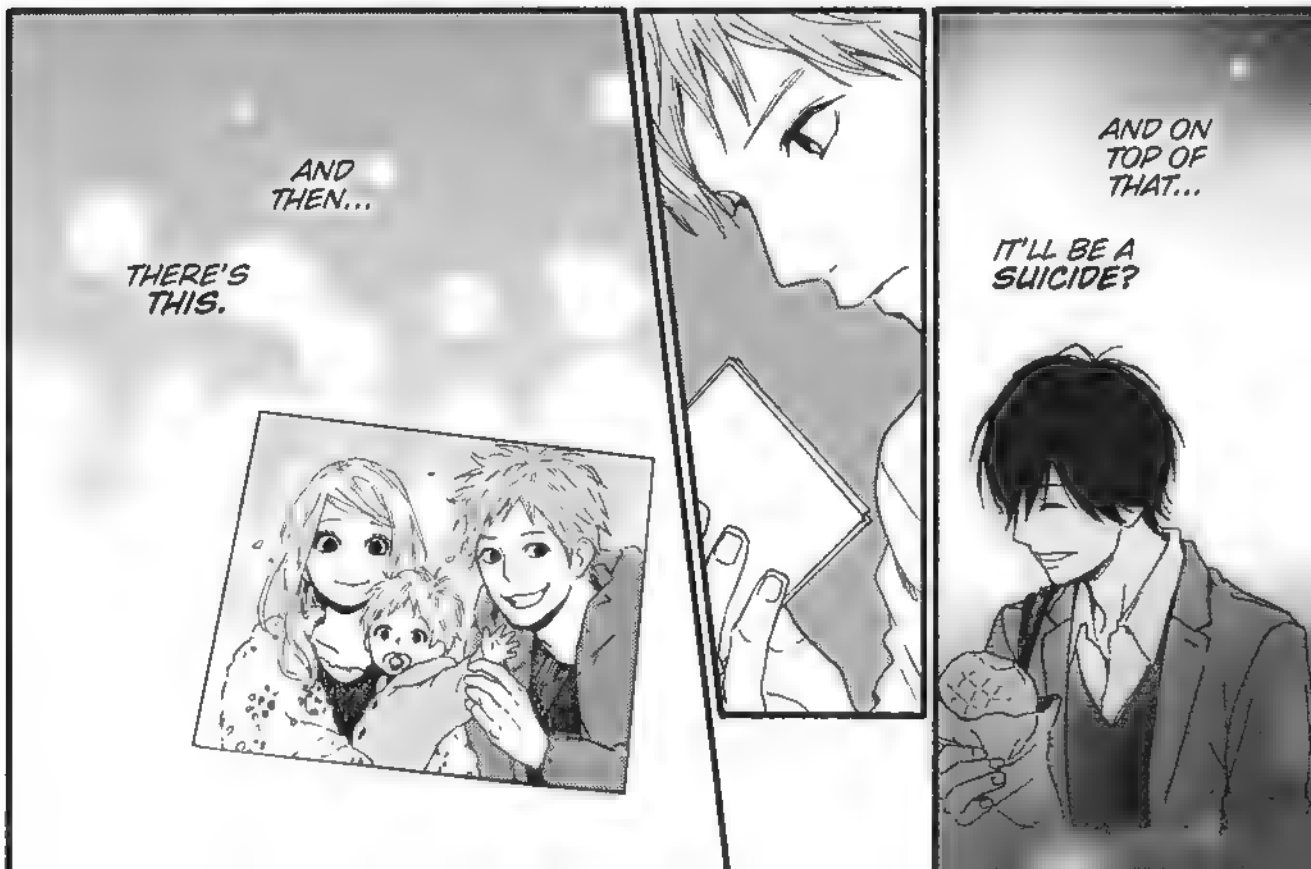
YEEEAH!!
Thanks, Kakeru!
Let's go turn in your club entry form right now!
YASSSS!!!
WOO-HOO!!
HEE!

You two are being embarrassing, so don't talk to me.
WHA...?
Don't talk to me.
STRIDE
STRIDE
STRIDE
STRIDE
GOOD MORNING, HAGITA-KUN.
OH!


THE LETTER WAS RIGHT AGAIN.
SO...
RUSTLE...
After his trial period, Kakeru chose not to join the club. But I think he really did want to play soccer. Please try and get him to join.

I READ IT THROUGH ONCE...
BUT I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT.
SO, I GUESS I SHOULD DO WHAT THE LETTER TELLS ME.

REALLY DIE?
WILL KAKERU...


AND THEN...
THERE'S THIS.
AND ON TOP OF THAT...
IT'LL BE A SUICIDE?

Right now, I'm married to Naho and we have a kid.

Our family of three lives together near Mount Kobo.

I know it sounds crazy.

I've enclosed a photo as proof.

But, I think that if Kakeru had lived, he and Naho would have lived happily ever after.

I feel like such a scumbag.

I feel like I should apologize to Kakeru.
Tell Kakeru and Naho
to go to Yohashira Shrine.

Tell Kakeru and Naho to go to
Yohashira Shrine.

NAHO?
DO YOU HAVE AN ENVELOPE?
YES, I DO.
YOU'RE FINISHED ALREADY?
JUST ABOUT.
OH, SHUSH!
HERE, YOUR ENVELOPE.
YOU'VE STILL GOT A LONG WAY TO GO, HUH?
You're only at the Culture Festival?
THANKS.
SAY, PAPA...
DO YOU THINK IT'S OKAY IF I...
WRITE "I MARRIED SUWA" IN MY LETTER?

Plus, I worked so hard...
to win your heart, Naho!
OKAY...
It would totally ruin my surprise proposal if you knew it was coming!
LIFE'S NO FUN IF YOU ALREADY KNOW THE FUTURE.
DON'T.
SO DEFINITELY DON'T WRITE ABOUT IT!
KA-TUNK.
ALL RIGHT.
Seri-ously! Don't! Do! It!
I said all right.

So if Suwa does something nice for you, thank him.
I'm sure he'd appreciate it.
• Suwa is the precious person who mended my heart.
LET'S SAY...
LET ME BREAK IT DOWN FOR YOU...
ALL RIGHT.
FIRST, WE SEND THE JAR WITH OUR LETTERS OUT TO SEA.

WE'LL NEED TO HAVE THE PERSON WHO FINDS THIS JAR PUT THE LETTERS IN THE MAIL.
WE DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHERE THEY'LL END UP.
EVEN IF THESE LETTERS REACH THE PAST AND NOT THE FUTURE...
"MIGHT" BEING THE OPERATIVE WORD.
IT MIGHT SLIP THROUGH TIME INTO THE PAST.
SHOULD THIS JAR FLOAT OUT INTO THE BERMUDA TRIANGLE...
We get it.
AND WE'LL INCLUDE A NOTE THAT SAYS "PLEASE PUT THE CONTENTS OF THIS BAG IN THE MAIL."
WE'LL PUT THE LETTERS TOGETHER IN A BAG SO THEY UNDERSTAND.
WE SHOULD PROBABLY ALSO WRITE IT IN ENGLISH.
AND ONCE IT REACHES THE POST OFFICE...
WE'LL NEED DIRECTIONS FOR THE POST OFFICE CLERK REGARDING THE DATE.
SOMETHING LIKE, "PLEASE DELIVER THESE LETTERS IN APRIL OF 2012."
RIGHT.
WE'RE JUST ASSUMING THAT A TIME SLIP WILL OCCUR...
BUT IF IT DOESN'T REACH THE PAST, WE'VE FAILED, AND GOING TOO FAR BACK COULD MESS THINGS UP AS WELL...
ON TOP OF THAT, WE DON'T KNOW WHO EXACTLY WILL FIND IT... OR IF THEY'LL EVEN FIND IT AT ALL.
THIS IS TOUGH...

BELIEVE THESE LETTERS WILL REACH THE PAST?
DO YOU GUYS REALLY...
WE'RE TRYING TO DO THE IMPOSSIBLE HERE, AFTER ALL.
DIFFICULTY IS IRREL-EVANT.
WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING MORE FOR THE KAKERU OF OUR WORLD.
WHETHER THEY ARRIVE OR NOT, IT'S NOT LIKE THIS WILL CHANGE ANYTHING IN THIS TIMELINE.
BUT... IF THE ACT OF SENDING THESE LETTERS LIGHTENS OUR FEELINGS OF REGRET EVEN A LITTLE...
THEN, EVEN IF THEY DON'T REACH THEIR DESTINATION, I STILL THINK IT'S WORTH IT TO SEND THEM.

I WAS NEVER ONE...
TO BELIEVE IN THE SUPER-NATURAL OR ANYTHING.
I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT THE LETTERS WILL ACTUALLY REACH THE PAST.
HAGITA'S RIGHT.
THAT THIS ACTUALLY WORKS.
I CAN'T HELP BUT HOPE...
STILL...
I WANT THESE LETTERS TO SAVE KAKERU.
MORE THAN ANYTHING...
Suwa Hiroto
Hiroto

EVERYONE MUST FEEL THE SAME, RIGHT?
THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO NOW BUT HOPE.
PLEASE, LET IT WORK!

DID THESE LETTERS MAKE IT HERE?
HOW IN THE WORLD...
I WONDER IF...
OUR FUTURE SELVES REALLY BELIEVED THESE WOULD REACH US.

IT...
To: Kakeru
Kakeru
Kakeru
TO KAKERU
To: Kakeru
REALLY IS A MIRACLE.
REACHED US...
THE FEELINGS AND WISHES OF OUR FUTURE SELVES...

Narvse
Kakeru
AND KAKERU.

LET'S MEET HERE TO DIG THE TIME CAPSULE BACK UP.
OKAY.
SO, IN TEN YEARS...

IN TEN YEARS, EH? I WONDER WHAT EVERYONE WILL BE DOING.
DIDN'T YOUR FUTURE SELF ALREADY TELL YOU IN YOUR LETTER?
RIGHT.
ALL SIX OF US!

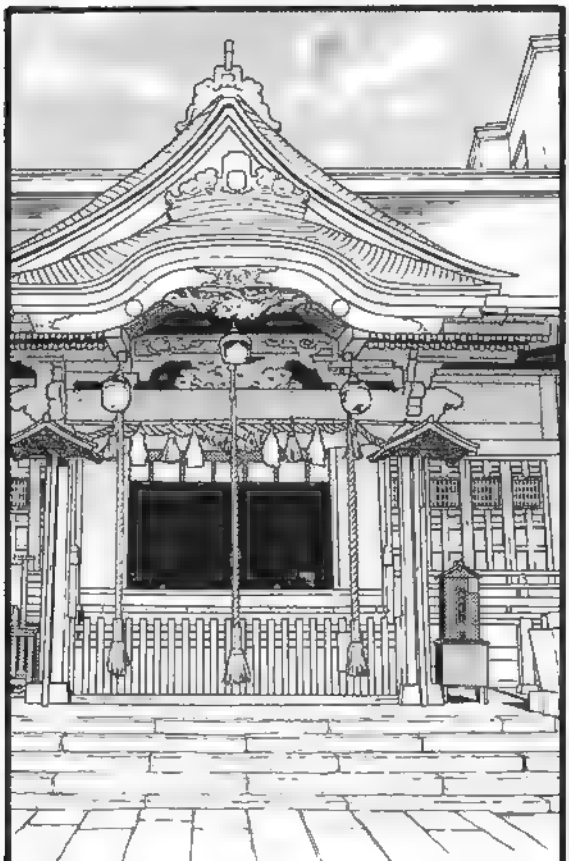
No one cares.
It's totally important.
I'm leaving.
we're not done talking here!
Hey!
RIGHT, I THINK THE ONLY OTHER THING WRITTEN IN MINE...
WAS THAT I SWITCHED FROM GLASSES TO CONTACTS.
NAH! THERE WASN'T ANYTHING ABOUT OURSELVES IN THE LETTERS.
WE WROTE THEM TO SAVE YOU, AFTER ALL.

AH!
HEY, EVERY-ONE--
OKAY, SURE!
NAHO?
UHM...
I... THERE'S SOMEWHERE I WANT TO GO.

NAHO!

JUST THE TWO OF US!

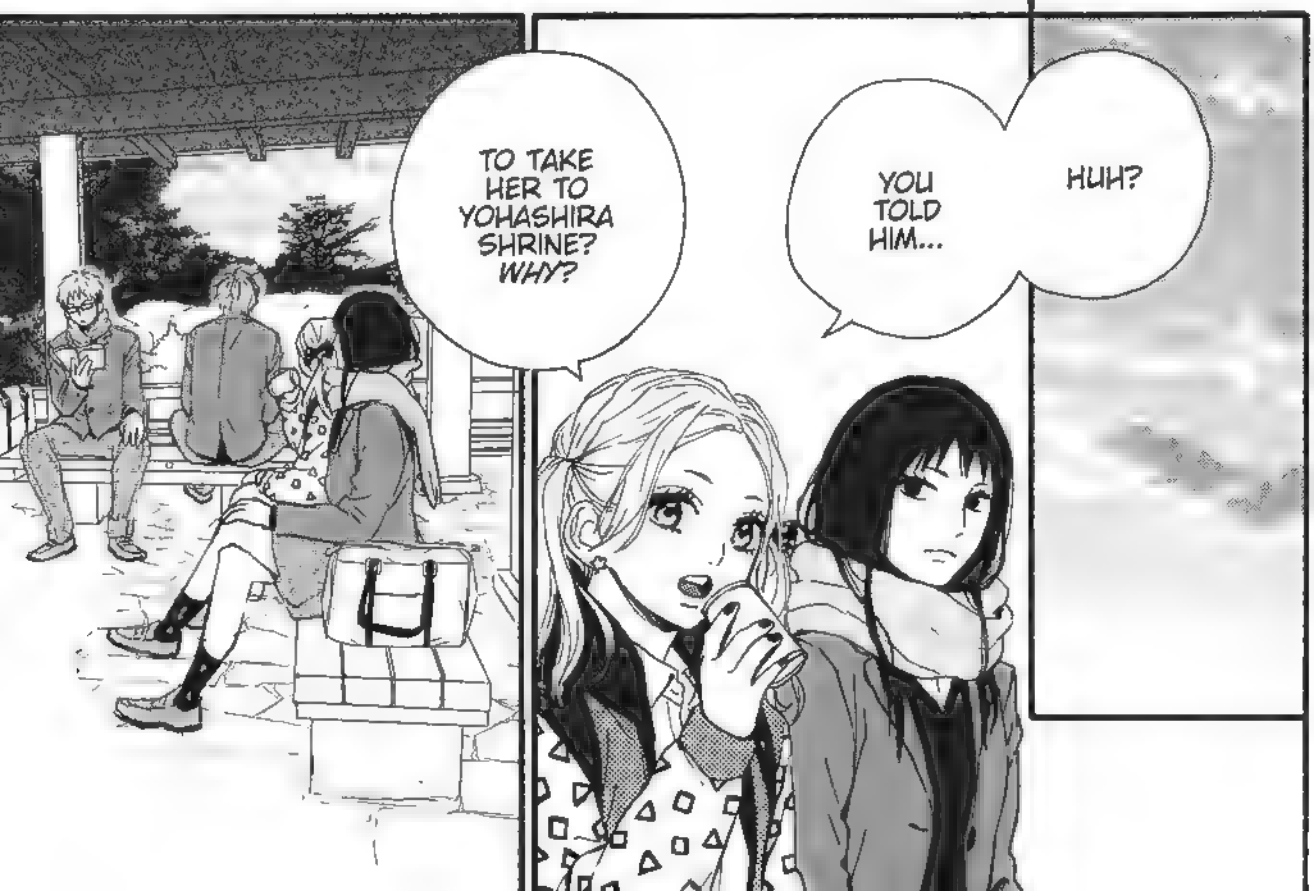
?

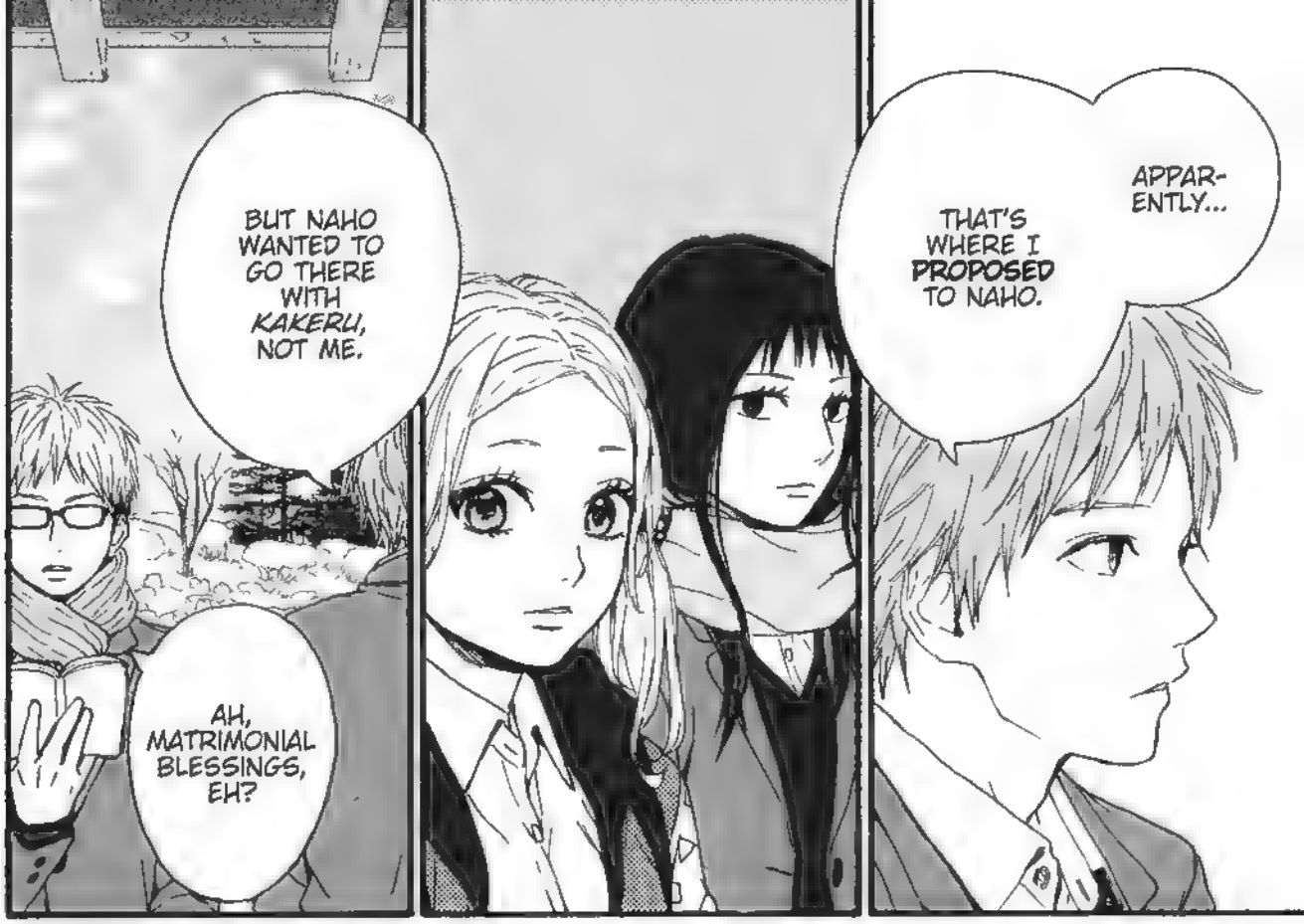


GRIN

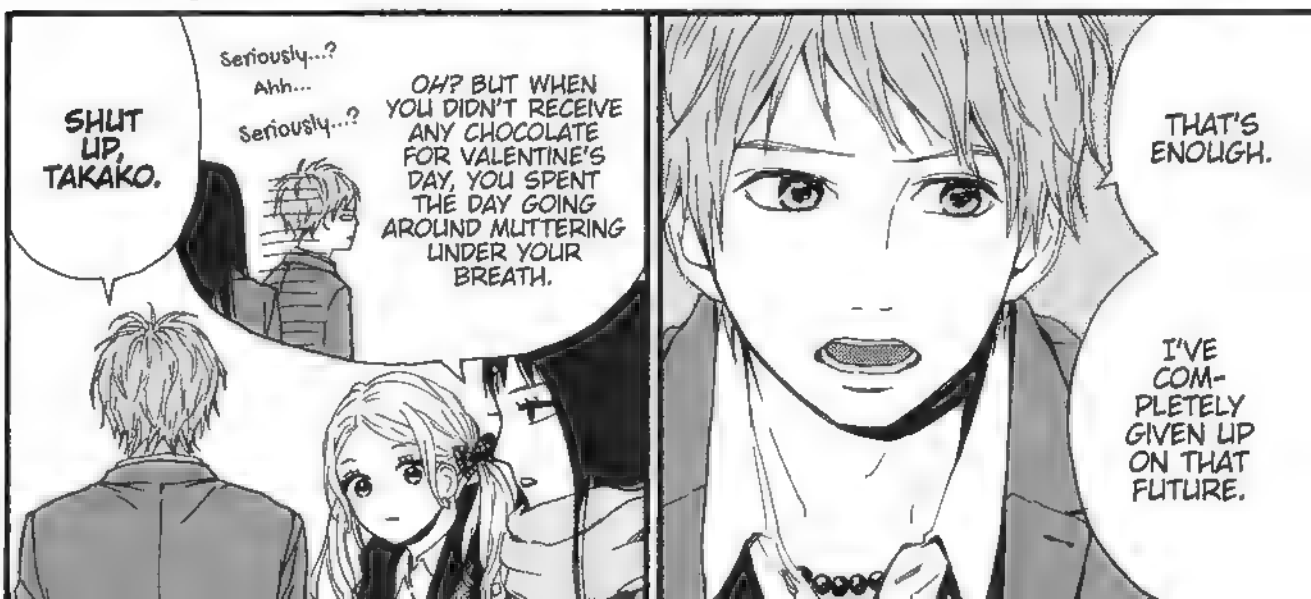
That startled me...

UM...YOU WANTED TO COME HERE?
TO RECEIVE THE BLESSINGS...
OF THE GODS OF MATCHMAKING AND MARRIAGE.
SUWA TOLD ME ABOUT IT.


HUH?
YOU TOLD HIM...
TO TAKE HER TO YOHASHIRA SHRINE? WHY?


AH, MATRIMONIAL BLESSINGS, EH?
BUT NAHO WANTED TO GO THERE WITH KAKERU, NOT ME.
THAT'S WHERE I PROPOSED TO NAHO.
APPAR-ENTLY...

No one's that good! Suwa, you're a saint! No, a god!
Are you seriously cool setting up the girl you like with your best friend?!
Suwaaa! Are you really okay with this?! Don't be such a martyr!


SHUT UP, TAKAKO.
Seriously...?
Ahh...
Seriously...?
OH? BUT WHEN YOU DIDN'T RECEIVE ANY CHOCOLATE FOR VALENTINE'S DAY, YOU SPENT THE DAY GOING AROUND MUTTERING UNDER YOUR BREATH.
THAT'S ENOUGH.
I'VE COM-PLETELY GIVEN UP ON THAT FUTURE.

I'M NOT A GOOD GUY AT ALL.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SUCH A GOOD GUY ALL THE TIME.
YOU DON'T NEED TO GIVE UP.
THAT'S WHAT MY FUTURE SELF SAID.
I'M... A SCUMBAG.
There's no way.
IS THERE REALLY ANY WAY THAT SHE WOULD MARRY ME?!
NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, NAHO NEVER THOUGHT OF ME AS MORE THAN A FRIEND!
THINK ABOUT IT!
WAS BECAUSE KAKERU DIED.
THE ONLY REASON NAHO AND I GOT TOGETHER IN THAT TIME-LINE...

NAHO WAS DEPRESSED BECAUSE KAKERU DIED...
AND SO, I ACTED LIKE KAKERU WOULD HAVE AND STEPPED IN.
I STOLE NAHO FROM KAKERU.
SAID SOME COMFORTING WORDS, PLAYED THE NICE GUY...

With Kakeru gone, I was able to slip in through the cracks of Naho's broken heart.

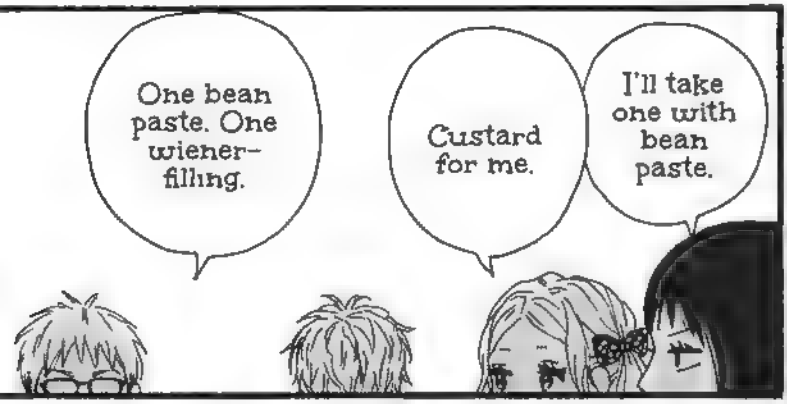
I used Kakeru.

WHAT?
THE SUWA I KNOW...
ISN'T LIKE THAT.

YEAH!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY YOU "STOLE NAHO"? YOU?
You don't have it in you.
Nope!
Hey..
IF NAHO WAS CRYING...
THEN OF COURSE YOU WOULD COMFORT HER.
YOU STEPPED IN FOR KAKERU...
FOR NAHO'S SAKE.

THAT'S THE SUWA I KNOW.
AND KAKERU.
ARE TAKAMIYA...
THE ONES YOU HOLD MOST DEAR...
ONLY YOU COULD HAVE WRITTEN THAT LETTER.
IT'S BECAUSE OF YOU, SUWA...
THAT WE WERE ABLE TO DO AS THE LETTERS ASKED.
YOU COULD NEVER CHOOSE ONE OVER THE OTHER.
YOU COULD NEVER PUT ONE'S HAPPINESS OVER THE OTHER, OR HURT EITHER OF THEM.

YOU'RE NOT PRETENDING TO BE A GOOD GUY.
YOU ARE A GOOD GUY.


One bean paste. One wiener-filling.
Custard for me.
I'll take one with bean paste.

YOU NEVER COMPLIMENT ME LIKE THIS.
WHAT IS UP WITH YOU GUYS?
ARE YOU TRYING TO MAKE ME BUY YOU ALL TAIYAKI OR SOMETHING?

HAVING RECEIVED A LETTER MYSELF...
HAGITA...
YOU'RE GETTING TWO?

I THINK THERE MUST BE A WORLD WHERE I CONFESSED TO NAHO ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.
BUT THIS ISN'T IT.
THAT ROAD ISN'T OPEN TO ME ANYMORE.
NOW...

KAKERU *IS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN MAKE NAHO SMILE.*

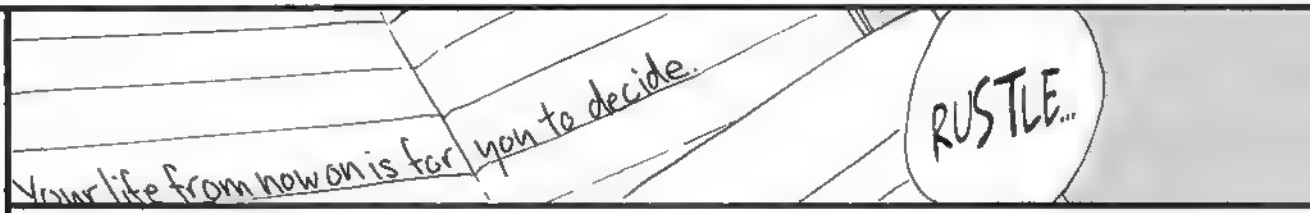
I TOLD MY MOTHER...
ABOUT THE PRECIOUS FRIENDS I'VE MADE.
AND THAT I WAS ENJOYING MY CLUB ACTIVITIES EVERY DAY, SO SHE DIDN'T NEED TO WORRY.
AND...
I MADE A WISH THAT I WOULD...
ALWAYS BE ABLE TO STAY BY YOUR SIDE, NAHO.

I WISHED THAT WE CAN ALWAYS BE THERE TO MAKE EACH OTHER SMILE!
TEN YEARS FROM NOW...AND ALWAYS!
I WANT TO BE WITH YOU FOREVER, AS WELL!
ME TOO!
I'M HAPPY.
BECAUSE I HAVE YOU AND THE OTHERS AROUND ME...
THANK YOU FOR MAKING MY WISH COME TRUE.
DURING THE FESTIVAL, I WISHED FOR HAPPINESS.
NAHO...

NOW IT'S MY TURN...
TO MAKE YOU HAPPY.
I PROMISE YOU.
OKAY.

Kakeru is the type who will hold back rather than seek his own happiness.

If someone doesn't give them a shove, neither of them will do anything.
I still think even getting them to walk side-by-side was a miracle.



Your life from now on is for you to decide.

So what will I be doing, ten years from now?

Who will Naho and Kakeru be smiling with?

In my world, I am happily married to Naho.
We have a child.

And if Kakeru were to live on in your world,
I'm sure he'll have a great life.

You should choose
your life for yourself.

Oh yeah, one more thing.
SCREECH
In a way,
I'm jealous of you.
I would have liked to have seen...
a future where Naho and Kakeru...

can stand together, smiling.

TO MYSELF, TEN YEARS FROM NOW...

I WISH I COULD HAVE SHOWN YOU THE FUTURE THAT I CHOSE.

I WENT AND BOUGHT SOME DRINKS.
AND CUPS AND CHOPSTICKS.
THANKS!
NAHO!
HEY, KAKERU!
THE OTHERS WILL BE HERE SOON.
C'MERE!
SNUB
IT'S OKAY, I'VE GOT IT.
I LEFT SOME-THING IN THE CAR.
TAKE THE BABY FOR A MINUTE, PLEASE.

KNOCK IT OFF.
IF HARU-KUN WERE A GIRL, I'D MARRY HIM!
WOW!
HARU REALLY LOVES SUWA, HUH?
HE'S USUALLY SHY AROUND NEW PEOPLE.
WELL THEN...
HARU-KUN AND I ARE GOING FOR A WALK!
Gotta grab that thing!
SORRY, SUWA!
Really!
SORRY! WE'LL BE RIGHT HERE.
COOL!

ALL RIGHT!
LET'S CELEBRATE HARU-KUN...
AND OUR REUNION! I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU LOSERS IN FOREVER!
FINE!
THEN LET'S CELEBRATE HARU-KUN...
AND THE FACT THAT HAGITA FINALLY HAS A GIRLFRIEND!
WHA?!
We all saw each other last month.
CHEERS!

IT'S AZU, RIGHT?
IS IT AZU?
HAGITA HAS A GIRLFRIEND?
IS IT AZU?
Cheers!!
IS IT A--
CHEEEERS!
Your face is bright red.
So, when's the wedding?
We're not getting married yet!
YET...?
Huh? Are we getting married?
Like we wouldn't?!!
I mean, uh--who are they even talking about?

Somewhere, a manga protagonist is missing their bottomless stomach.
I WAS HUNGRY!
SUWA, YOU'VE EATEN A LOT.
WE BETTER CLEAN UP!
THAT'S RIGHT!
MUNCH MUNCH
AH...
IT'S ALMOST TIME, ISN'T IT?
Oh, Hagita-kun, you're coming, too?
IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE WE'VE BEEN TO KAKERU'S.
Yeah!
LET'S HEAD TO THE HOUSE!
Shut up.
IT DOES.
THIS JUST FEELS LIKE THE RIGHT TIME TO DO THIS, YOU KNOW?!
OH...
THE SUNSET!

IT'S SO PRETTY!

IT'S ORANGE.
THE TOWN...
THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS ...
AND ALL OF YOU!

THIS IS...
A SIGHT I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE.

HEY...
KAKERU.
WOULD YOU WANT TO...
SEND A LETTER TO YOURSELF IN THE PAST?

I WOULD.
I'D SEND IT TO MYSELF AND MY MOTHER.
YEAH.

I'D TELL THEM, "I'M HAPPY NOW."
AND, "THERE WILL COME A DAY...
"WHEN YOU'LL BE HAPPY TO BE ALIVE."
I WOULD WANT TO TELL THEM...
"I WANT YOU TO LIVE."

LET'S WRITE IT.
WE'LL MAKE A FUTURE YOU WON'T REGRET, KAKERU.
OKAY!

MORNING.
A DREAM ...?
.....?

A DREAM LAST NIGHT.
I HAD...
MORNING.
KAKERU...
WAS IN IT.
WATCHED THE SUNSET TOGETHER.
WE ALL...

HE SAID...
"THANK YOU FOR THE LETTER."
I KNOW.
I HAD THE SAME DREAM.

I WON-DER...
WHAT HAP-PENED WITH THE LET-TERS?
IF THERE'S A WORLD WHERE THE LETTERS NEVER ARRIVED...
THEN THERE MUST BE ONE WHERE THEY DID, RIGHT?
ONLY WE CAN CHOOSE FROM THE NUMEROUS POSSIBLE FUTURES.
IF THERE ARE FAILURES, THEN THERE MUST ALSO BE SUCCESSES.
IF YOU LOSE YOUR WAY...
THEN I WILL, WITHOUT FAIL...

COME...
AND HELP YOU.
NAHO!
ARE YOU UP?

YOU'RE GOING TO BE LATE FOR YOUR ENTRANCE CEREMONY!
NAHO?
RATTLE...

«End»

orange

Thank you...
for all your hard work over these past three years!!
Suwa.
I'm counting on you, man.

This is a good luck charm.
Don't ever give up!
CLUNK...
ARE YOU SURE?

Club Withdrawal Form
Club: Soccer
Class: 3-6
I SEE.
I KNOW IT'S BEEN A TOUGH TIME FOR YOU...
INSTEAD OF QUITTING, LET'S JUST SAY YOU'RE TAKING A BREAK FROM THE CLUB.
YES.
I'VE GIVEN IT A LOT OF THOUGHT.

FOR NOW, JUST TAKE IT EASY.

You've got skills!
You need to join our club!
Kakeru!
That was amazing!
SWISH

AFTER HE PASSED AWAY, I REALIZED...
KAKERU DIED IN AN ACCIDENT.
I SHOULD HAVE LOOKED AFTER HIM MORE.

NAHO, LET'S GO!
BOONG
BEEENG
BOONG
BIING

HAGITA.
LET'S GO.
I'M ON CLEANING DUTY TODAY.
THEN I'LL MEET YOU AT THE SCHOOL ENTRANCE LATER.
OKAY.

IS IT TRUE THAT YOU...
QUIT THE SOCCER CLUB?

YEAH, I QUIT.
WHY?
IT DOESN'T MATTER.
IS IT BECAUSE ...

OF KAKERU --?
STAY THE HELL OUT OF IT!
Incoming Mail
2013/4/23 (Tue.)
Suwa Hiroto
I'm just gonna go on home.

STOP THINKING ABOUT ANY OF IT ALREADY.
I SHOULD JUST...
IF I CAN'T DO ANYTHING RIGHT...
WHY EVEN TRY AT ALL?

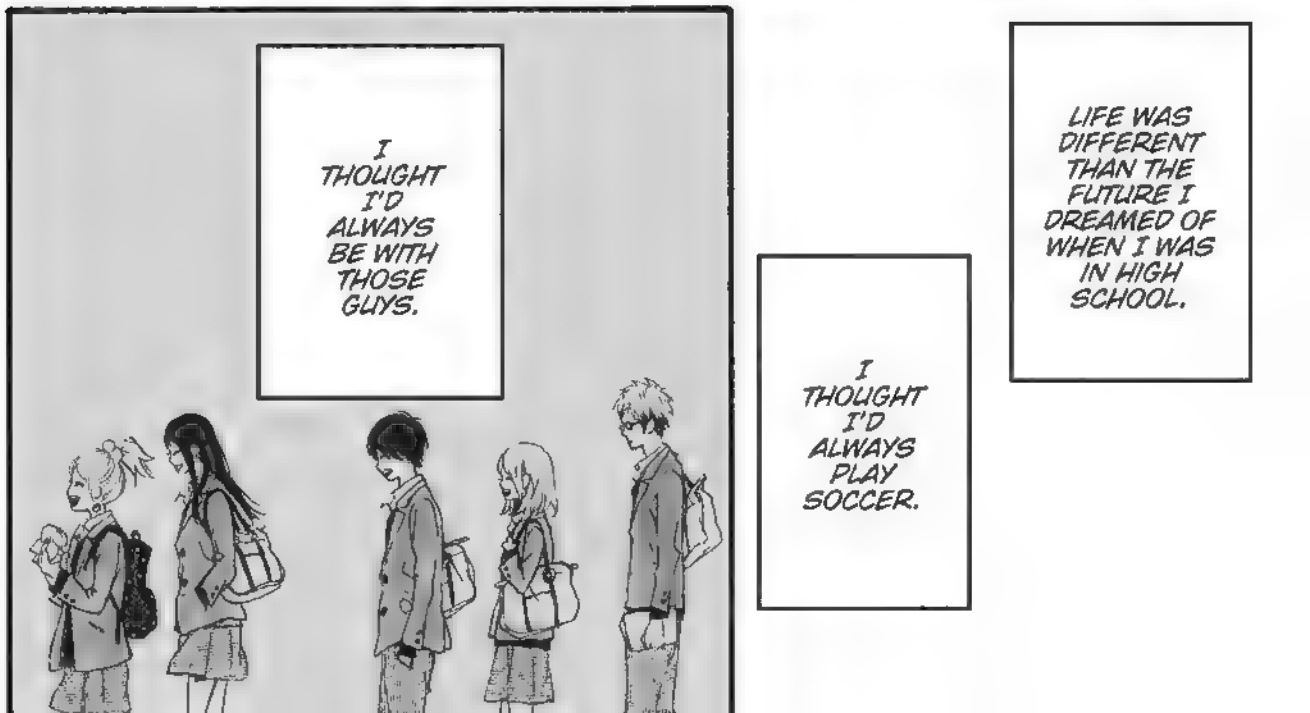
IF YOU CAN'T BE THERE FOR THE PEOPLE THAT NEED YOU...
THEN NOTHING MATTERS, ANYWAY.

CRAP!
I FORGOT THAT REPORT IS DUE TODAY!
AGAIN?
DUDE, I'M NOT HELPING YOU THIS TIME.
HOW ABOUT YOU, SUWA?
I TURNED MINE IN A LONG TIME AGO.
SERI-OUSLY ?!

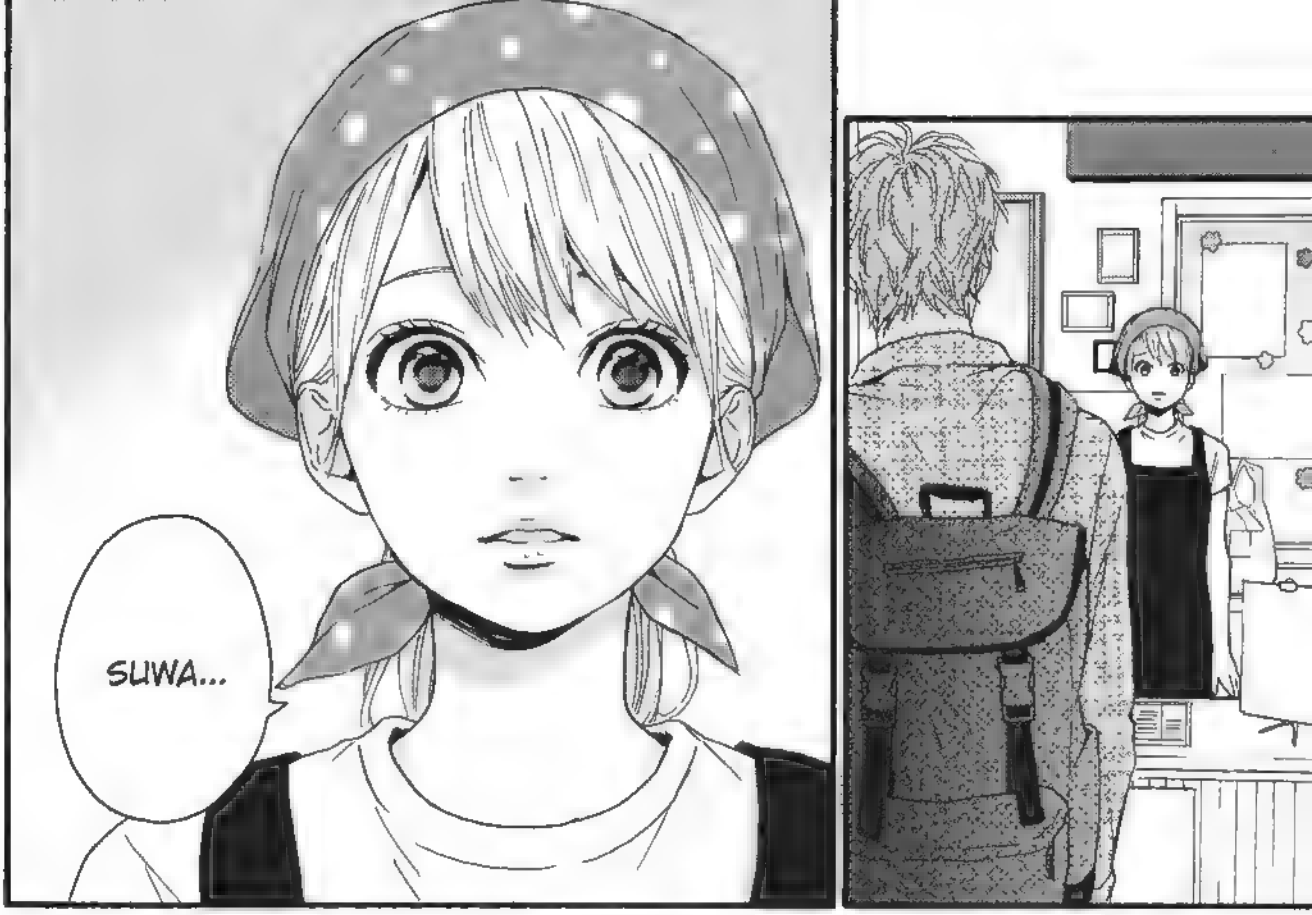
I GUESS YOU MUST HAVE A LOT OF FREE TIME SINCE YOU DON'T HAVE A GIRL-FRIEND.
SHUT UP!

SO, SUWA, ARE YOU EVER GONNA DATE SOMEONE?
YEAH, SOON.
OHHH!

I WAS TWENTY YEARS OLD.
IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE...
COME ON!
NOT PARTICU-LARLY.
YOU GOT YOUR EYE ON SOMEONE?


I THOUGHT I'D ALWAYS BE WITH THOSE GUYS.
I THOUGHT I'D ALWAYS PLAY SOCCER.
LIFE WAS DIFFERENT THAN THE FUTURE I DREAMED OF WHEN I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL.

IF NAHO IS DOING WELL.
I WONDER ...
I WONDER WHAT THE OTHERS ARE DOING.
I'll be late, so go ahead and eat dinner on your own.
DING DING
Smells good
WELCOME!
BENTO SHOP KOMACHI
Open
A NEW BENTO PLACE?


SUWA...

NAHO?

BUT IT'S WHAT ALL MY FRIENDS ARE DOING!
I'M NOT VERY GOOD AT IT...!
WHOA!
YOU'RE WORKING IN FOOD SERVICE?!
THIS IS MY PART-TIME JOB...
HUH?!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!

Ha ha!

DID THIS PLACE OPEN RECENTLY?
YUP. IT'S OWNED BY A FRIEND OF MY MOM.
AH.
SO, WHAT DO YOU RECOM-MEND?

I MADE THE VEGETABLE STIR FRY AND GINGER PORK.
WHOA!
THEN I'LL HAVE THAT!
IN FACT, I'LL TAKE TWO!
Huh ...?
Two, huh?
Shut up.

IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE WE TALKED...
THE FIRST TIME SINCE ENTERING COLLEGE.
I WANTED TO FORGET.

REMEMBERING THOSE TIMES BRINGS BACK SO MUCH PAIN.
NO MATTER HOW HAPPY WE WERE BACK THEN...
TO GO BACK TO THAT TIME, WE CAN'T.
EVEN IF WE WANTED ...

WE CAN'T FORGET.
NO MATTER WHAT...
BUT...

is it okay if I watch the fireworks with Naho?
At the end of the cultural festival...
Suwa.

Hmm...
Nope.
I told her the two of us would watch them together.
Did you make her a promise?
Well, you like Naho.
Since it's you saying that, I'll tell her it's a no-go.
I see.
Why if it's me?
Huh?

Okay, okay! But, uh...
Don't you like her, too?
How did you know?
What if someone hears you?!
It's pretty obvious.
Don't even try to deny it.
.....
No...
Come on!
Don't hold back on my account.
We're rivals, after all!

BENTO SHOP
KOMACHI
DING
DING
GOOD
EVE--

A VEGETABLE STIR-FRY BENTO...
AND A GINGER PORK BENTO.
AGAIN?
IT WAS JUST BECAUSE I WAS HUNGRY.
I WAS ONLY THERE FOR THE FOOD.

NAHO!

I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR THIS THE WHOLE TIME...
THE PRESENT IS SO DULL AND COLORLESS.
I WANNA GO BACK.
FOR SOME HOPE.
YEAH, SHE'S GOING TO A TRADE SCHOOL FOR FASHION DESIGN.
TAKAKO'S IN TOKYO NOW, RIGHT?
AZU'S GOING TO A LOCAL CULINARY SCHOOL.
GUESS WHAT?
TAKA-CHAN CAME BACK TO VISIT MATSUMOTO. SHE AND I HUNG OUT WITH AZU.
OH?

THAT'S COOL...
I NEVER GET TO SEE THEM ANYMORE.
YEAH...
AND HAGITA WENT TO UNIVERSITY IN TOKYO AS WELL.
THAT LOSER HARDLY EVEN ANSWERS MY TEXTS!
ha ha!
IIDA-SENPAI...
ARE YOU FREE THIS SATURDAY?
SATURDAY ...?
HEY...
NAHO-CHAN!

ACTUALLY, I'M WORKING...
THEN HOW ABOUT SUNDAY?
I'M SORRY, I WORK SUNDAY, TOO...
SHEESH!
WHEN ARE YOU FREE?
UM...
HOW ABOUT NEXT WEEK?!
NEXT SUNDAY?!

YES.
I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT, SUWA.
IS HE THE REASON...
YOU STARTED WORKING ALL THE TIME?
I WANTED AN EXCUSE...
TO TURN HIM DOWN.

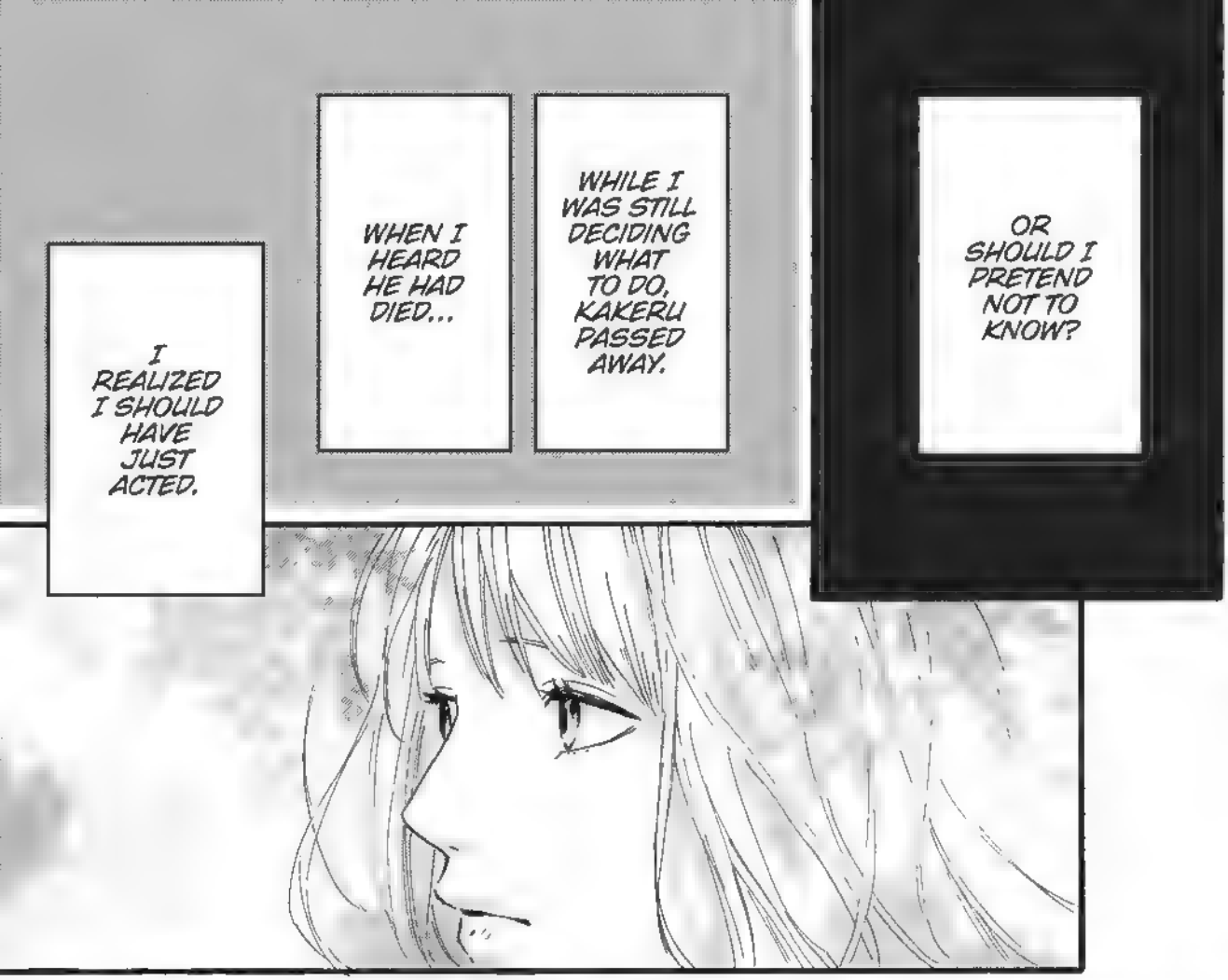
I...
YOU CAN GO AHEAD AND QUIT.

I ALREADY HAVE SOMEONE I LIKE.
LIKE...
IT'S OKAY.
IT'LL NEVER HAPPEN...
BUT I'VE ALWAYS LOVED THIS PERSON.

HOW STUPID.
I TOLD HIM WE WERE RIVALS.
AND YET, THIS SEEMS TO BE THE ONLY WAY I CAN WIN.
So, I heard...
that you were gonna watch the fireworks with Kakeru on the last day of the festival.
Huh?!

That's what Kakeru said.
You excited?
Yeah.
Naho!
Switch with me for mist station duty!
Huh?!
All right...
The soccer club managers are coming today.
Sorry!

I KNEW THAT NAHO LIKED KAKERU...
AND THAT KAKERU LIKED NAHO.
I'VE NEVER KNOWN WHAT TO DO WITH THIS KNOWLEDGE.
WOULD IT BE BEST TO CHEER THEM ON?


I REALIZED I SHOULD HAVE JUST ACTED.
WHEN I HEARD HE HAD DIED...
WHILE I WAS STILL DECIDING WHAT TO DO, KAKERU PASSED AWAY.
OR SHOULD I PRETEND NOT TO KNOW?

NAHO WOULDN'T LOOK SO SAD.
MAYBE THEN...

I WANT TO SEE...
THAT SMILE ONCE MORE.
BUT...
THE ONLY TIME SHE SMILED LIKE THAT...

IF I COULD...
DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN...
WAS WHEN KAKERU WAS THERE.
BE THERE FOR NAHO.
I WOULD ...
NAHO.
ONE MORE TIME.
LET'S DO IT OVER.

LET'S MAKE PLANS...
FOR NEXT SUNDAY.
Uh...
Orange juice...
What?
I'm imitating Naho.
AH HA HA!
You surprised me. I never knew you did impressions.
Hurry and go buy me some juice, Hagita-kun.
Me?

You really like Naho, don't you?
Hey...
You're the one with the crush, Suwa.
Jerks! I'm gonna spit in your drinks!
And I'll put them in my pockets so they get warm!
I'll take coffee milk.
Don't look at me!
So...
If you had a girlfriend, where would you take her on a date?
Myself...
I'd take her to see a soccer match.
When you say girlfriend...
You mean Naho, don't you?
Kakeru...
Where would you take your girl-friend?

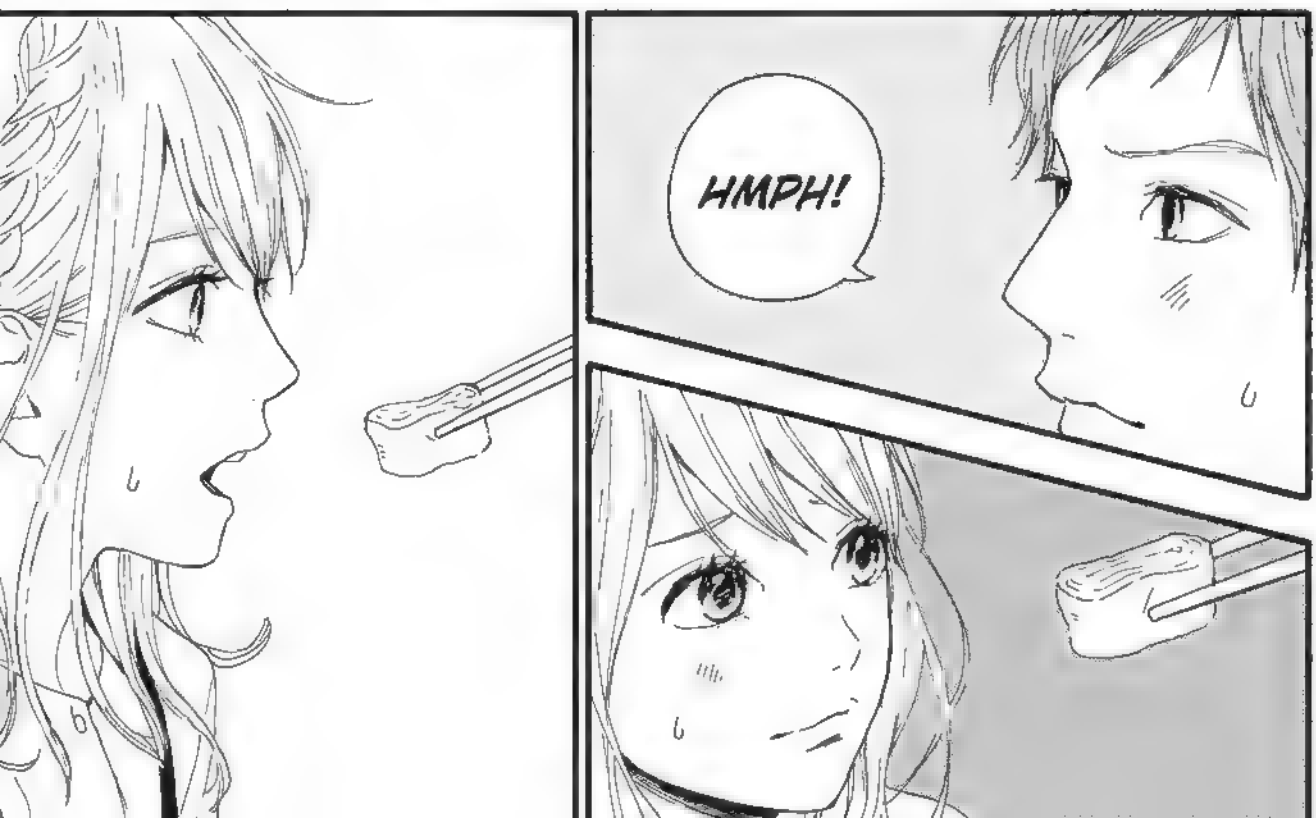
On a nice spring day...
we could eat lunch together outside.
I think...
the park would be nice.
I wanna do...
that bit where my girlfriend says, "Ah!" and I feed her.
I would want her to feed me.
Wait, it's better the other way around.
?
Speak for yourself!

I MADE... LUNCH FOR US TO SHARE.
Whoa! NiCe!!
I MADE WAY TOO MUCH...
No worries, I can eat it!
I'll eat it all!
THE WEATHER IS GREAT.
THE FOOD IS DELICIOUS.
THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS ARE PRETTY.
TODAY REALLY IS THE PERFECT DAY!

I'M SORRY...
FOR NOT BEING THERE FOR YOU.
SHE'S PROBABLY CRIED SO MUCH IN THE LAST FEW YEARS.
WHAT NAHO IS THINKING.
I ALWAYS WONDER ...
NAHO.
WILL YOU TRY SOME OF THIS FOOD MY MOM MADE?
SURE!
MY MOM PRACTICALLY FORCED ME TO TAKE IT WHEN I TOLD HER WE WERE HAVING A PICNIC.
THOUGH, I'VE GOTTA ADMIT, HER TAMAGOYAKI IS PRETTY GOOD.
I wanna try some!
HERE.

HUH?!
SAY, "AH!"

It's fine, eat it!
This is embarrassing!
I CAN FEED MYSELF!
WHY?!
J-just eat it!


HMPH!

SHWF
F
OMM!
♪
Here.
?
You do it like this!

NOM!
FWOOP
Pfff!
Your face!
Quit screwing around!!
Kakeru !!!
I've never seen someone get so mad over food!
You should see yourself!!
What are you idiots doing?
AH HA HA!
Why do you hate me?!

MUNCH
MUNCH
MUNCH
I KNEW YOU'D NEVER GIVE UP FOOD WILLINGLY!
You're so mean!
Su-waaa!!
AH HA HA!
sorry, sorry!
Naho, you should have seen your face!
HA HA HA!

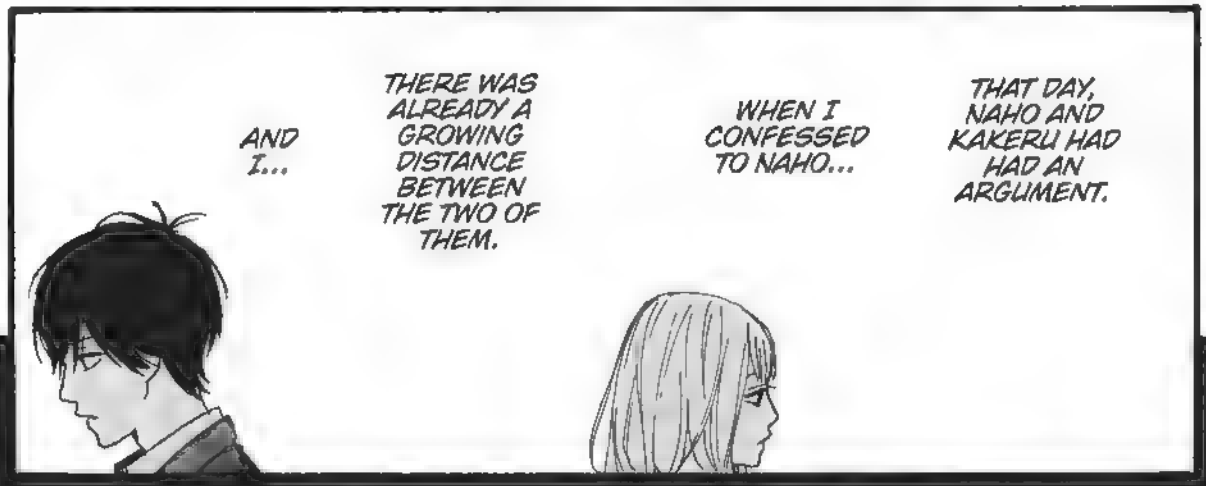
AH...
IT'S BACK.
THANKS...
TO KAKERU.

I'M SORRY.
I WON'T WAVER ANYMORE.

YOU REALLY...
ARE AMAZING.

SUWA, THANK YOU.
NAHO NEEDED KAKERU.
HEY... DO YOU THINK MAYBE WE COULD HANG OUT LIKE THIS AGAIN...?
TELL YOUR MOTHER THAT HER COOKING WAS DELICIOUS.
RIGHT. YOUR STUFF WAS REALLY GOOD, TOO.
THANKS.
LIKE WE DID IN HIGH SCHOOL ...?
.....
OKAY.

MAYBE NAHO DOES REMEMBER...
THE DAY I CONFESSED TO HER.


AND I...
THERE WAS ALREADY A GROWING DISTANCE BETWEEN THE TWO OF THEM.
WHEN I CONFESSED TO NAHO...
THAT DAY, NAHO AND KAKERU HAD HAD AN ARGUMENT.

I'd rather go to the movies together.
I wanna try sharing a big tub of popcorn with her.
I would want us to do something athletic.
If I were going on a date in the park...
There's no way she could keep up with you.
Naho, I mean.
Neither could I...
SAW THAT AS MY CHANCE.

UH... WHY IS AZU HERE?
Whaddaya mean "Why"?
I'M SORRY.
I THOUGHT THE MORE THE MERRIER!
WELL!
UHM!
WHAT GIVES, NAHO?!
I HAD NO IDEA THAT YOU WOULD BE HERE, SUWA.

SO SHE INVITED AZU AS A CHAPER-ONE.
THAT MUST BE IT.
SHE DOES REMEM-BER MY CONFES-SION.
THIS MUST MEAN...
I want us to have fun down at Suzuki River.
UH... WHY IS TAKAKO HERE?
Hey, what do you mean, "Why"?
Hm?
SORRY

I want the two of us...
to watch the fireworks festival in yukata.
Back at Matsumoto Bon-Bon...
I thought she looked cute, but couldn't say it. This time I will.
There's no way I could say something like that.
Yeah, you're not that smooth!
Aha ha!

THE THREE OF US.
LET'S GO TO THE SUZUKI RIVER FIRE-WORKS.
TOGETHER.

YOU MEAN WITH AZU?
OKAY, I THINK IT'S ON THE TWENTY-FIRST THIS YEAR--
WITH KAKERU.

WEAR YOUR YUKATA.
TOGETHER WITH KAKERU, WE'LL WATCH THE FIRE-WORKS.

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I'VE SAID KAKERU'S NAME.
I WONDER WHAT THE KAKERU IN NAHO'S MEMORY IS LIKE.
THE CLEAREST THING I REMEMBER ABOUT HIM...
IS HOW MUCH HE LOVED NAHO.

THE WAY HIS EYES LOOKED WHILE WATCHING HER...
IT'S LIKE HE WAS LOOKING AT A STAR OUT OF REACH.
LIKE HE WAS STARING AT THE MOST PRECIOUS THING IN HIS WORLD.
BUT...
HE COULD NEVER TELL HER HE LOVED HER.
I wonder... if Naho'll be okay.
They might be pushing her to do odd jobs again.
I'll carry it.
I told you, she's fine.
Ahhh! I should've switched places with her.
I'm sure she's fine.
That always happens.
Where's Naho?
Naho gave it to me!
Did... Naho say anything?

I screwed up bad.
I want to apologize, but I don't know what to say that won't hurt her.
About New Year's Eve?
She hasn't said anything.
Don't worry about it.
Confess my feelings?
No, I can't.
I don't really like her anymore.
Naho, I mean.

HE REALLY, REALLY LOVED HER.

HE TREASURED NAHO WAY MORE THAN I DID.

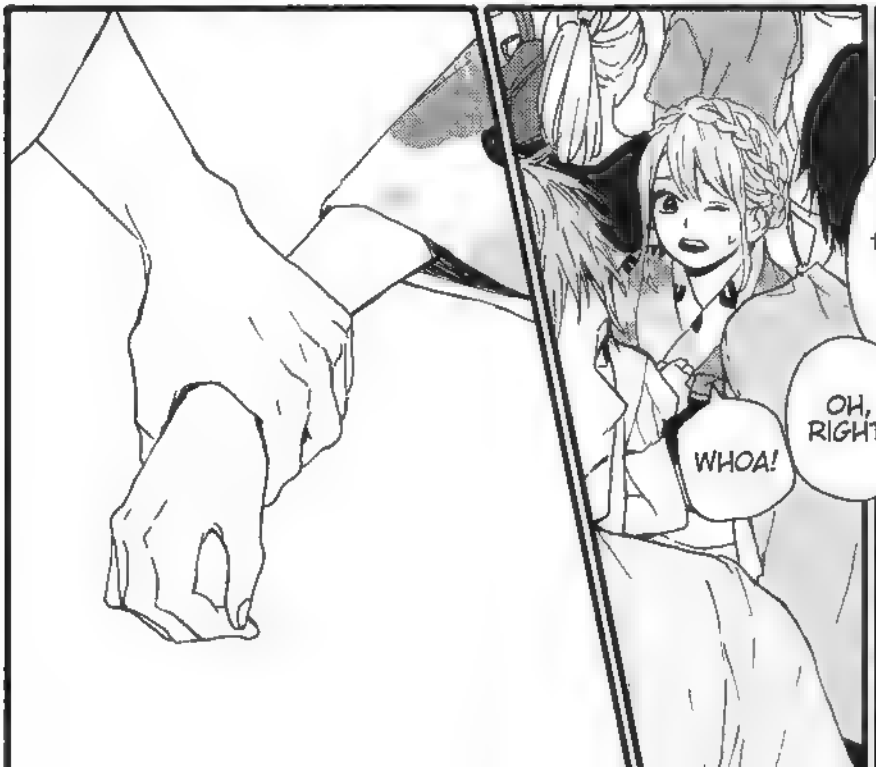
BUT I KNEW...

THAT TO THE END, KAKERU STILL LIKED NAHO.

BECAUSE SHE WAS SO PRECIOUS, HE COULDN'T GET CLOSE.
I just want to watch over her.
BUT...
HE SAID HE WAS AFRAID TO CONFESS HIS FEELINGS.
I WANTED TO BE LIKE KAKERU.
I COULDN'T, BUT...
I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT.
BOOM
I WANTED TO...
FALL FOR NAHO WHOLE-HEARTEDLY, THE WAY HE HAD.

Signs Yakisoba Deluxe Fried Chicken

Signs: Takoyaki, Kebab



RIGHT.
SUWA?
GOTTA STAY TO-GETHER.
MY HAND.
OH, RIGHT.
HM?
IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW.
HERE.
I WANTED TO HOLD HER HAND A LITTLE LONGER...
Though we weren't really holding hands.
YOU'RE SWEATING.
USE MY HAND-KER-CHIEF.

THANKS...
I SHOULD BE THANKING YOU!
HYUU
IF I WERE KAKERU...
PWOOOM
I WOULD HAVE CONFESSED TO NAHO IN A HEART-BEAT.

IT'S SO PRETTY.
NAHO...
YOUR YUKATA... IS VERY CUTE.

I LOVE YOU.
I ALWAYS...
HAVE.

EVER SINCE HIGH SCHOOL.
I...

I LOVE KAKERU.
I ALWAYS...
WILL.

I'M A SCUMBAG.
I WANTED TO BE ALONE WITH NAHO...
SO I SAID, "LET'S WATCH THE FIREWORKS WITH KAKERU!"

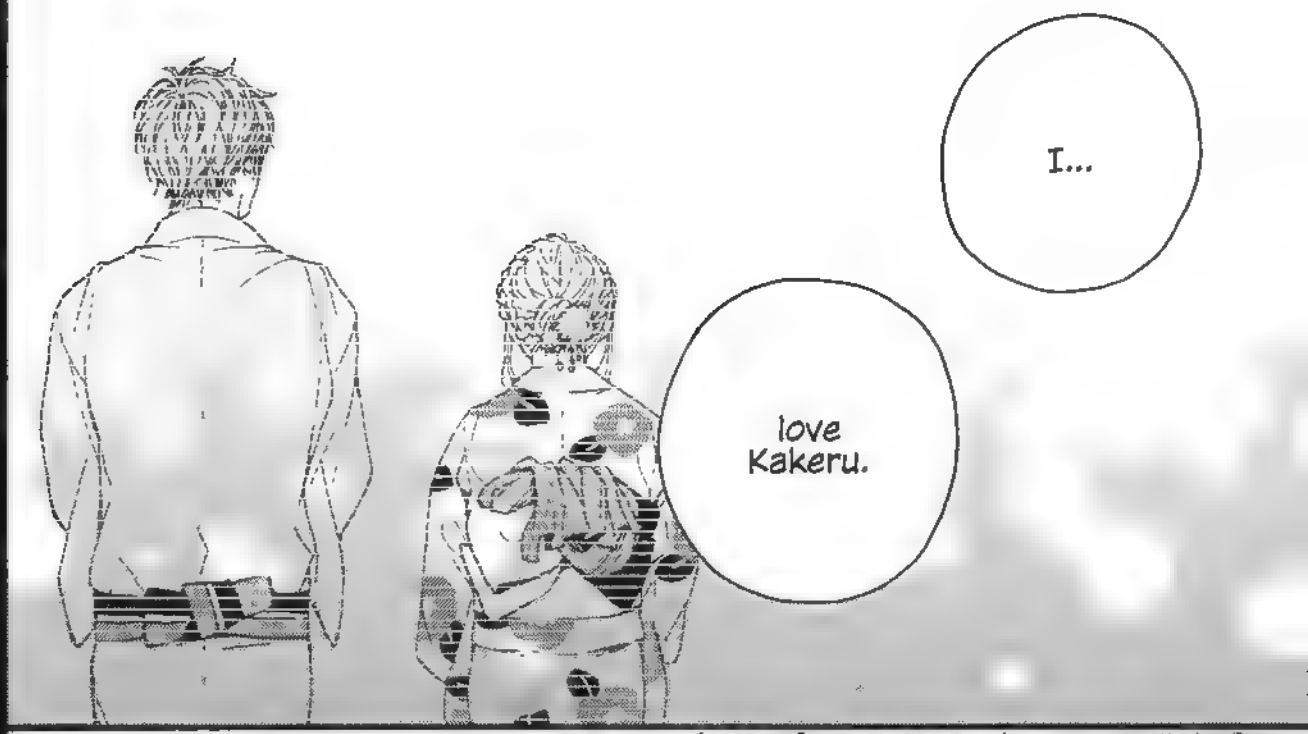
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND HOW KAKERU, WHO SAID THAT WITH A SMILE...
COULD TRULY MEAN IT.
I'll cheer you on!
I think you...
and Naho should just get together already!

LIKE I COULD BRING MYSELF TO CHEER FOR THE TWO OF THEM TO GET TOGETHER.

I NEVER FELT...

I'M SUCH A SCUMBAG.

orange
Suwa Haruo 2



I...

USED KAKERU.

Will.

I WASN'T THINKING OF ANYONE BUT MYSELF.

WHEN I CONFESSED TO NAHO...

ON THAT NEW YEAR'S EVE IN ELEVENTH GRADE...

DIDN'T MATTER TO ME.

AND KAKERU'S...

NAHO'S FEELINGS...

IF I HAD THOUGHT FOR A **SECOND** ABOUT NAHO'S HAPPINESS, I WOULDN'T HAVE DONE IT.

BUT ALL I COULD THINK OF...

WAS WHAT I WANTED.

That's not true...
But even if he did, it would be okay.
Because I...
have always...
loved you.

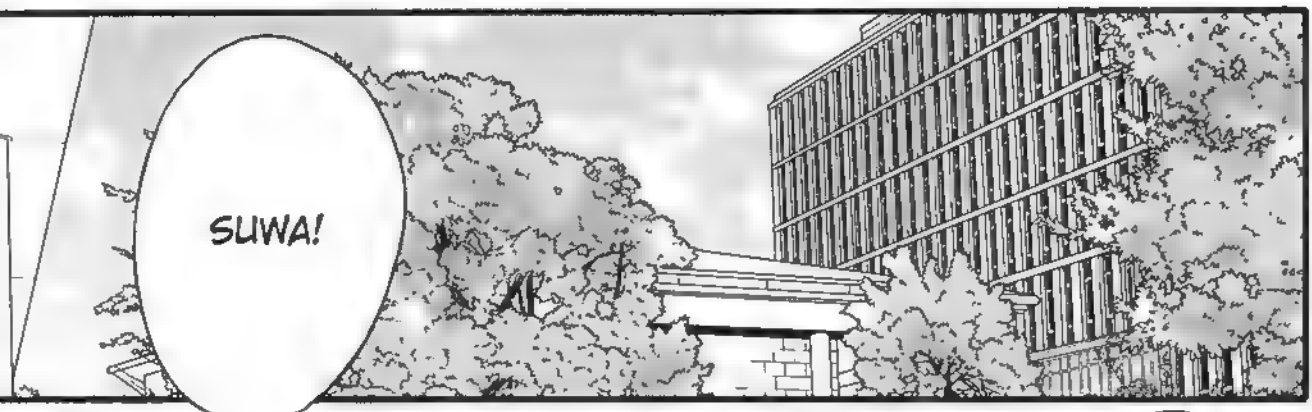
No matter what happens...
I will always love you.
More than Kakeru--

I...
I love Kakeru.
I always ...
will.

I'm sorry.

I KNEW THAT I HAD BEEN REJECTED.
BUT...
IT STILL SURPRISED ME THAT NAHO HAD TURNED ME DOWN.
I WAS SUCH AN IDIOT.
BENTO SHOP
KOMACHI
WELCOME!

OH, NAHO-CHAN?
SHE FINISHED WORKING HERE LAST MONTH.
SHE WAS REALLY ONLY DOING IT TO HELP US OUT WHILE WE LOOKED FOR SOMEONE MORE PERMANENT.


SUWA!

BUY ME LUNCH!
WHY SHOULD I?
'CUZ I FORGOT MY WALLET.
NO WAY! I'M TOO BROKE FOR THAT.
ASK WADA.
Oh, speak of the devil.
Wadaaa!

I WAS INVIS-IBLE.
TO NAHO...
I UNDER-STOOD.
AND IN THE PRESENT.
BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL...
Hey.
If you beat me in rock-paper-scissors...
you can watch the fireworks on the last night of the festival...
with Naho.

It's fine.
You let us have mist station duty together, after all.
You go with her instead.
Ah...
No, really...
Rock...
Paper...
Wha?!
Scissors !!
Crap! You win!!
You go!!
I can't believe I lost!!
Uh...
Ahhhhh!

I WAS KINDA MAD...

THAT KAKERU KEPT PUSHING ME TO GO OUT WITH NAHO.

EVEN IF I HAD GONE OUT WITH HER, NAHO WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN HAPPY.

THAT DAY...
"Are you excited?"
"Yes."
I BEGAN TO WONDER ...
WHAT IF KAKERU AND NAHO DIDN'T END UP TOGETHER?
IF THINGS WENT WRONG BETWEEN THE TWO OF THEM, I MIGHT STILL HAVE A CHANCE.

BUT...
THAT WAS JUST ME BEING SELFISH.
WATCHING THOSE TWO...
I BEGAN TO HATE MYSELF.
I BOTTLED IT ALL UP.
"I... "love Kakeru.
"I always have.
"And always will."
I...

I LOVE HER.
AND...
I ALWAYS WILL.
DING-DOONG
DO YOU...
HAVE A MINUTE?

WHERE...?
JOUYAMA PARK.
IT'S CLOSE BY.
WEAR SOMETHING WARM.
Huh?
Huh?
?
CLOSE YOUR EYES.
NO...
CLIMB THE OBSER-VATION DECK TO LOOK AT THE NIGHT SKYLINE?
YOU EVER...
OKAY.
OPEN YOUR EYES.
SOON.
CAN I LOOK YET?
IT'S OKAY, I'LL GUIDE YOU.
I CAN'T SEE... I'M SCARED...
DON'T OPEN YOUR EYES UNTIL I SAY WHEN.
DON'T LOOK YET.

.....
IT'S SO PRETTY...

Matsumoto's night skyline...
must be beautiful.
Tokyo's must be even better.
Nah.
Matsu-moto's air is so clean!
Air?
The best time...
for seeing the skyline at night is when fall flows into winter.
I think it's because the air clears up.
Oh.
I wonder...
if **Naho** likes the night skyline.

I WAS ALWAYS JEALOUS OF HIM.
THE DREAMS KAKERU ALWAYS TALKED ABOUT...
I'M SURE THEY'RE DREAMS NAHO SHARED.
I WAS JEALOUS, AND I HATED MYSELF FOR IT.
EVEN THOUGH THERE'S NO WAY I COULD CHEER HIM ON...
"I think you and Naho should just get together already!"
IN ALL HONESTY ...
KAKERU PROBABLY FELT THE SAME WAY.
HE SAID HE'D SUPPORT US, BUT...

WHAT...
WATCHING US FROM

I...
WANTED TO BE KAKERU.
BACK THEN...
AND THEN...
IF HE WERE HERE INSTEAD OF ME...
AND THEN.

WOULD NAHO...
BE HAPPY AGAIN?
I'M SORRY.

I'M SORRY THAT I COULDN'T...
TAKE KAKERU'S PLACE.
When is...
Naho's birthday?
March 14th.
Oh, White Day.
Oh, cool!
Not only that, but it's exactly half a year after my birthday!
Heh!
My birthday's closer.
I wonder if she'll give us chocolate on Valentine's Day.
I guess we'll find out in three months.
If you were going out with her...
what would you do with her on her birthday?
PFF!
Don't be stupid.
I'm serious!

What about you, Suwa?
We would go bowling, then to karaoke, then to eat yakiniku...
And I would give her a hundred roses!
PFFF!
.....
Don't laugh!
That sounds like a wrap party!
Well, you've certainly got lots of ideas... you're funny!
Why do you make it sound like an insult?!
Like that bit about dressing up as Santa and throwing gifts from the window on Christmas! Another great plan!
Okay, drop it!
So, what would you do, Kakeru?!
Hmm...
Well, for her birthday...
a surprise would be good...
but I can't think of anything.

If I ever get the chance to go out with her, I'll think of something then.

IT'S IN THREE MONTHS...
BEFORE THAT IS CHRIST-MAS.
It's next week.
THERE'S NO WAY SHE'D GO OUT WITH ME, SO I SHOULD GIVE UP ON ASKING HER OUT FOR CHRISTMAS EVE.

ARRGH!
IN THE END, HE NEVER TOLD ME WHAT HE WOULD DO ON HER BIRTHDAY!
WHAT DO I DO?
I'M JUST NO GOOD AT THESE THINGS.
A SUR-PRISE...
BUT WHAT?

WHERE...
ARE YOUR GLASSES?!
A HAGITA WITHOUT GLASSES IS NO HAGITA AT ALL!!
No, I'm Hagita.
No matter what type of Hagita I am, I'm still Hagita.
HOW LONG ARE YOU IN TOWN?
UNTIL THE THIRD.
ISN'T THAT KINDA SHORT? YOU SHOULD STAY LONGER.
I HAVE WORK.
TAKAKO IS ALSO COMING BACK TOMORROW...
WHY DON'T WE ALL GET TOGETHER?
We're visiting the shrine on New Year's Eve.

I'LL GO IF I HAVE TO.
YOU DIDN'T COME LAST YEAR.
I DID, JUST NOT ON THE ANNIVER-SARY.
.....
NAH.
I ALREADY HAVE PLANS.
WHAT ABOUT FEBRUARY?
FOR KAKERU'S GRAVE VISIT?
I WANT EVERYONE TO BE CLOSE AGAIN--LIKE WE WERE IN HIGH SCHOOL.
THE SIX OF US WERE INSEPARABLE... IT WAS FUN, RIGHT?
EVEN IF THE FIVE OF US GET TOGETHER, IT'S JUST SAD.
YEAH, BUT THINGS CAN NEVER BE THE WAY THEY WERE...
BECAUSE KAKERU'S GONE.

I WENT TO THE SUZUKI RIVER FIREWORKS THIS YEAR...
WITH NAHO AND KAKERU, JUST THE THREE OF US.
EVEN IF KAKERU IS GONE, I DON'T WANT HIM TO BE FORGOTTEN.
I WANT...
BUT HE'S GONE.
DON'T COUNT KAKERU OUT.

I'M...I'M JUST NOT ENOUGH.
BUT FOR THAT, WE NEED KAKERU...
I WANT TO SEE NAHO'S SMILE AGAIN.

YOU KNOW.
Who?
HER.
Her– who?
SHE CONTACTED ME.
"SHE"?

AZUSA!
Ooh~! Hagita and Azusa, sitting in a tree...
Shut up!

IT BEGAN AFTER SHE STARTED SEEING YOU.
NAHO HAS BEEN SMILING A LOT MORE THESE DAYS.
SHE ALSO SAID...
YEAH.
SHE SAID SHE HUNG OUT WITH YOU GUYS RECENTLY.

MAYBE I ACTUALLY CAN...

MAKE NAHO HAPPY.

orange
- future -

Hey, Naho!
EVEN IF THEY'RE THE SAME THINGS, THEY'RE DIFFERENT IN NAHO'S EYES.
WHAT I GIVE HER AND WHAT KAKERU GAVE HER...
Huh?!
Wha?!
For you.
Here's a drink.
I bought it by accident.

EVEN SO, KAKERU NEVER HAD ANY CONFI-DENCE.

I DON'T THINK HE HAD ANY DESIRE TO **CONFESS** TO NAHO, EITHER.

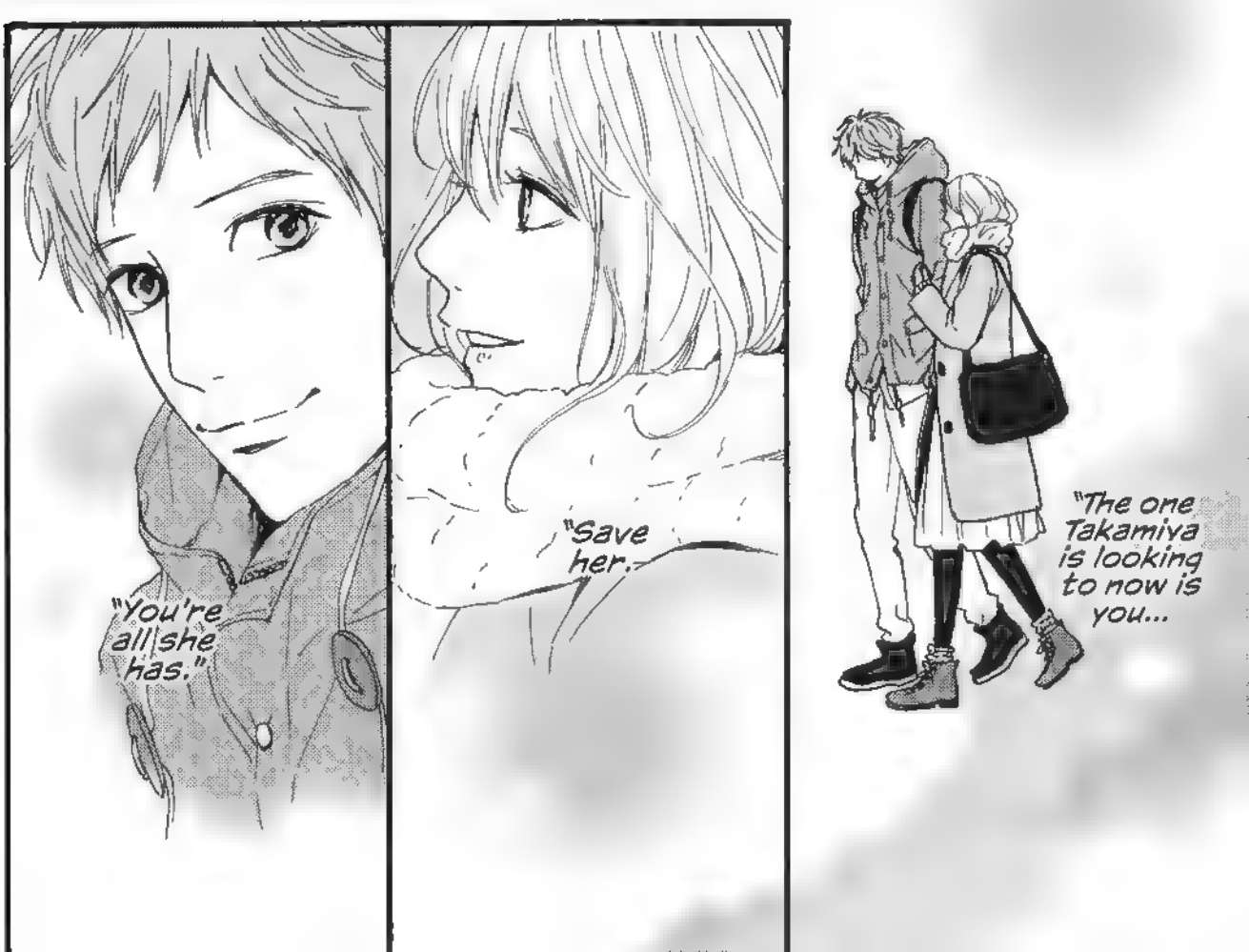
WHETHER IT REALLY WAS BECAUSE HE BELIEVED SHE DESERVED BETTER...

OR FOR ANOTHER REASON ENTIRELY...

Naho...
had some junk in her hair.
Junk?
Well, not junk exactly.
We were talking outside and the wind blew...
"Whoosh!" ...Like that.
WHOOSH!
Did her skirt...?
No, her skirt wasn't flipped up.
Something--dead leaf...?
Whatever it was, it got stuck in her hair.
I couldn't touch her...
You should have taken it out.
I couldn't ...
Why not?
I wanted ...
to get it out for her... But I couldn't.
Huh?
Takako noticed and fished it out.

But for a second, I really wanted to...
then I got embarrassed and couldn't do it.
You're adorable.
So innocent!
Stop it.
You are, though.
Knock it off.
At this rate, you won't even be able to hold her hand!
I know.
That's... just never gonna happen.

IF THAT HAD BEEN KAKERU ...
WHAT KIND OF FACE WOULD SHE HAVE MADE?


"You're all she has."
"Save her.
"The one Takamiya is looking to now is you...

I STILL HAVE TO DO MY BEST TO TAKE CARE OF NAHO.
EVEN IF I CAN'T TAKE KAKERU'S PLACE...
I'M PROBABLY NO DIFFERENT THAN THAT ANNOYING UPPER-CLASSMAN.
IN NAHO'S EYES...
I'D WANT HER TO CHOOSE ME.
EVEN IF I'M HER SECOND CHOICE...

ARE YOU FREE ON MARCH 14TH?
I WANT TO THINK THAT NAHO NEEDS ME IN HER LIFE.
EVEN IF IT'S JUST A SHORT TIME...
EVEN IF IT'S NOT FOREVER...

I'M SUPPOSED TO HANG OUT WITH AZU. DO YOU WANT TO JOIN US?
THAT'S OKAY. YOU TWO CAN HANG OUT.
BUT, THAT DAY...
I JUST NEED AN HOUR OF YOUR TIME.

3
2017 March
COULD BE MY LAST CHANCE.
RIGHT...
THIS...

Sign: Matsumoto Station

I'LL GIVE UP ONCE AND FOR ALL.
IF THIS DOESN'T WORK...
WANNA HEAD FOR NAWATE STREET?
OKAY.
I WANNA GET SOME TAIYAKI. IT'S BEEN FOREVER SINCE I'VE HAD IT!
Hee hee!
SOUNDS GOOD.

THIS SHRINE IS DEDICATED TO RELATIONSHIPS AND LOVE, AFTER ALL.
WHAT DID YOU WISH FOR?
YOU LOOKED SO SERIOUS!
WELL...
NAHO...

?
UHM...!
UH...

H-HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

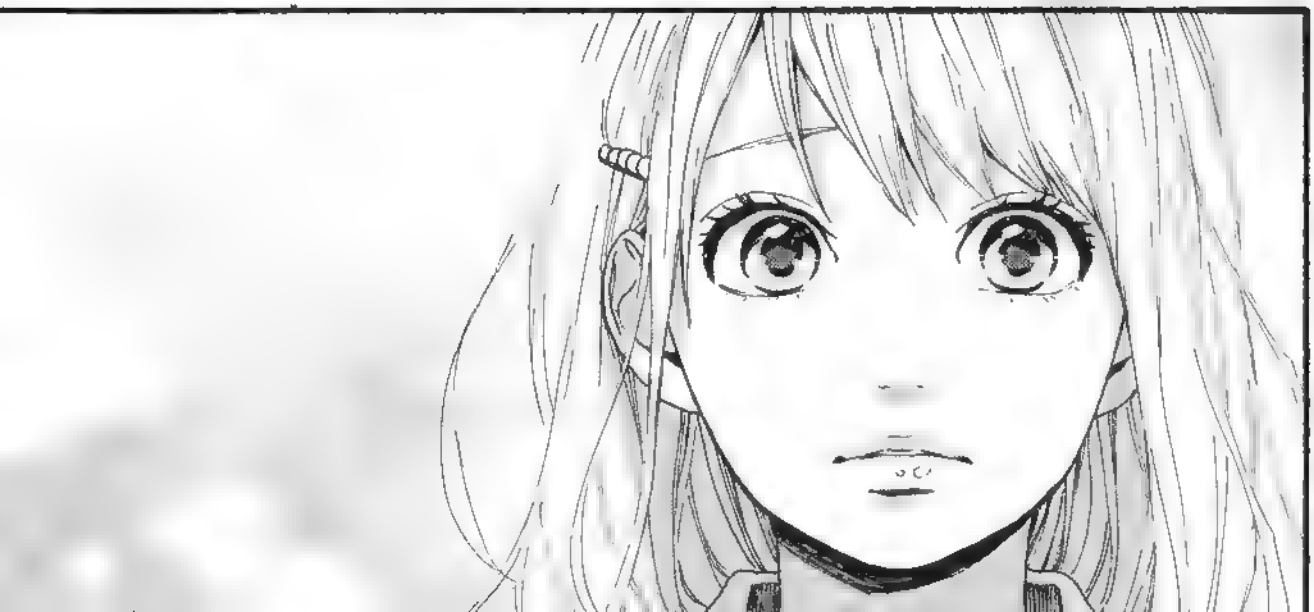
RIGHT...
AND LIVING TO THIS POINT.
THANK YOU FOR BEING BORN...

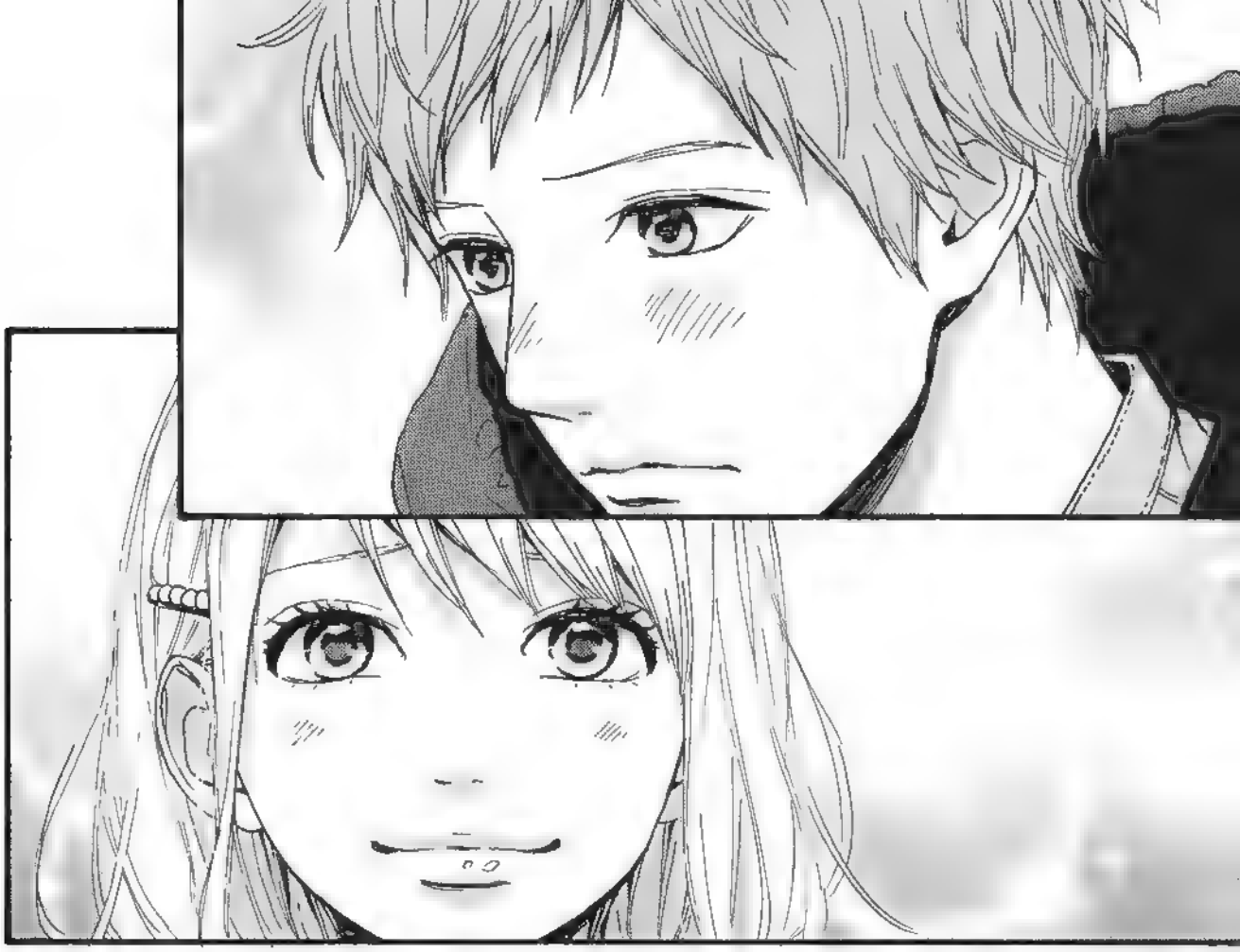
BUT...
NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY, I'LL PROBABLY NEVER BE AS GOOD AS HE WAS.
I KNOW I CAN'T TAKE KAKERU'S PLACE.
I...

KAKERU...
ISN'T WITH US NOW, NO MATTER HOW MUCH WE WISH HE WAS.
THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU WON'T CRY ANYMORE...
OR FEEL YOUR HEART HURT WHEN YOU THINK OF HIM...
BUT...
NOW, WHEN YOU DO, I'LL BE THERE EVERY TIME TO CHEER YOU UP.

BECAUSE YOU ARE MY HOPE, NAHO.
TEN YEARS FROM NOW...
TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW...FIFTY YEARS FROM NOW...
I WANT TO BE THE ONE TO MAKE YOU SMILE, NAHO.
SO...

PLEASE MARRY ME.





Seri-
ously?!
WE AREN'T EVEN DATING YET...
BUT...
THANK YOU.

THANK YOU, REALLY.
BUT...
I'M SORRY.
YOU REJECTED ME TWICE ALREADY...
THIS IS THE THIRD TIME...
PLEASE... GIVE ME A LITTLE TIME.
I WILL...
DEFINITELY GIVE YOU MY ANSWER.

THIS IS...
FINE.
OKAY.
.....
I JUST WANTED HER TO KNOW THAT.
IS TRULY PRECIOUS TO ME.
NAHO...
I DON'T HAVE A CLUE ABOUT HOW TO DO IT RIGHT.
BUT SINCE THIS IS ME...
I THINK KAKERU WAS MUCH BETTER AT MAKING NAHO HAPPY.

KAKERU MUST BE LAUGHING AT ME.

I MADE LUNCH.
ARE YOU HUNGRY?
UM...
CAN I GIVE YOU MY ANSWER NOW?
SPFFF!
HAGITA SAID HE GOT HIS LICENSE IN TOKYO.
I SEE.
MM! THIS POTATO IS GOOD.
SUWA...

I...
REALLY ENJOY SPENDING TIME WITH YOU.
WHEN WE'RE TOGETHER, IT FEELS AS IF I'VE **REGAINED** SOMETHING I'VE LOST... IT'S AN AMAZING FEELING.
UH, SURE. GO AHEAD...
GULP!
REMEMBER WHEN WE SAW THAT MOVIE...
AND YOU ORDERED THAT HUGE TUB OF POPCORN?
BY THE TIME THE MOVIE WAS OVER, YOU HAD EATEN THE WHOLE THING!
THEN, AT SUZUKI RIVER...
THE FOUR OF US MET UP AGAIN AND GOOFED AROUND.
I LAUGHED SO MUCH THAT DAY.
LOOKING AT THE FLOWERS WITH YOU IN ALPS PARK...
AND EATING A LEISURELY LUNCH WITH YOU BROUGHT BACK MEMORIES OF HIGH SCHOOL.

AND WHEN YOU SAID...
THAT MY YUKATA WAS CUTE, IT MADE MY HEART RACE.
NO...
AND WHEN WE WENT TO THE FIREWORKS...
IT REALLY DID FEEL LIKE KAKERU WAS THERE. I WAS SO HAPPY.
AND I'LL NEVER FORGET THE NIGHT SKYLINE AT JOUYAMA PARK.
IT WAS SO BEAUTIFUL.
I NEVER KNEW YOU COULD SEE SUCH A PRETTY SKYLINE LIKE THAT IN MATSUMOTO.
NONE OF THAT WAS ME.

BUT...
THE THING THAT MADE ME HAPPIEST...
I JUST WANTED TO MAKE NAHO HAPPY.
I JUST PLAYED KAKERU'S PART.
IT'S ALL STUFF KAKERU WANTED TO DO WITH NAHO.
WAS WHEN YOU PROPOSED TO ME ON MY BIRTHDAY.

I THINK THAT'S...
THE HAPPIEST ...?
THE HAPPIEST I'VE BEEN SINCE THE DAY I WAS BORN.

YES...
IT WAS THE **BEST** BIRTHDAY I'VE EVER HAD.
AND...
YOUR CONFESSION TO ME AT THE FIREWORKS MADE ME HAPPY, TOO.

I HURT HIM VERY BADLY.
THAT DAY I FOUGHT WITH KAKERU...
I COULD NEVER GET UP THE COURAGE...TO TELL KAKERU ANY OF THE THINGS I WANTED TO SAY...
I REMEMBERED THE TIME YOU CONFESSED TO ME BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL.
EVEN YEARS LATER...
I HATED MYSELF.
BUT...
SUWA, YOU TOLD ME YOU LOVED ME.
"I love you."
"No matter what happens, I will always love you."
THOSE WORDS SAVED ME.
THAT'S WHY...
I WAS HAPPY WHEN YOU SAID YOU STILL LIKED ME.

BUT I...
THOUGHT THAT I SHOULD SPEND THE REST OF MY LIFE LOVING ONLY KAKERU...
SINCE I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING FOR HIM WHILE HE WAS ALIVE.
BUT HAVING YOU BY MY SIDE MADE ME REALIZE THAT'S NOT THE CASE.
I DON'T WANT TO REGRET LOSING SOMEONE PRECIOUS AGAIN.
I THINK, INSTEAD OF BEING STUCK ON SOMEONE WHO'S GONE...
I SHOULD TREASURE THE PEOPLE **RIGHT HERE** IN FRONT OF ME.

THE TWO OF US, TOGETHER.
I HAVE SOMEONE...
WHO WILL KEEP ME SMILING EVEN TEN YEARS FROM NOW.
OR IN TWENTY OR FIFTY YEARS.
I WILL ALWAYS...
AND FOREVER ...
LOVE YOU, SUWA.

SO...
FROM NOW ON, I'M COUNTING ON YOU!

YOU BETTER HURRY UP AND EAT!
CLASS STARTS SOON.

SAY, "AH!"
WANT SOME TAMAGOYAKI?
.....
NOM!
SHWFF

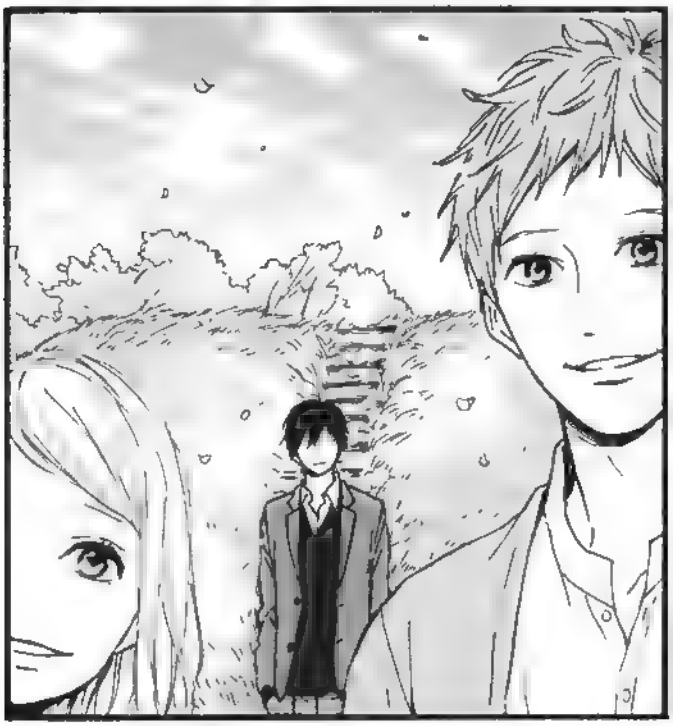
I THOUGHT IT WAS IMPOS-SIBLE.

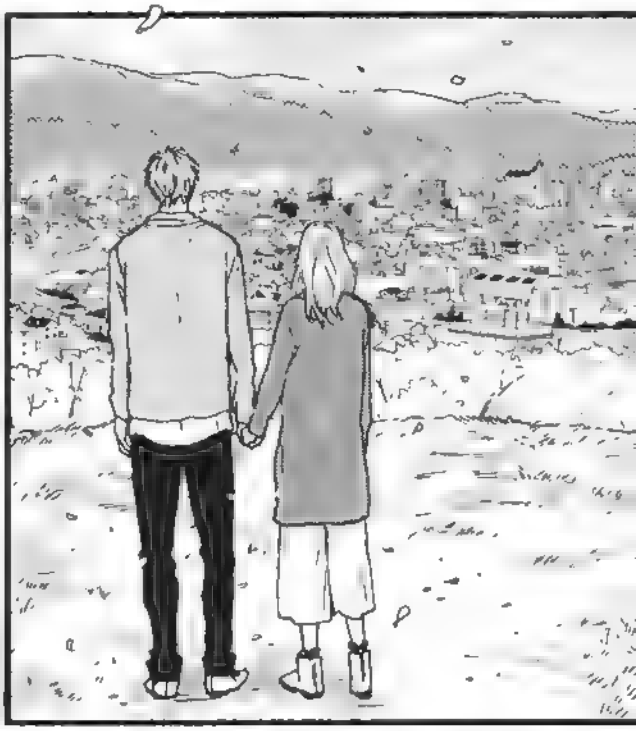
I THOUGHT THAT I COULD NEVER BE GOOD ENOUGH.

I FIGURED THAT THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD BRING NAHO HAPPINESS AND JOY...

WAS KAKERU.

I STILL FEEL THAT WAY.





BUT...

I WON'T...

GIVE UP, EITHER.

«End»

To everyone who has picked up volume 6...

Hello, Takano here!
It's been a while. How are you?
I'm so happy that we could meet once more, now that you've picked up Volume 6, which follows the conclusion of Volume 5.

The "future" in the title *orange -future-* comes from the song "Mirai" (future) that the band Kobukuro wrote for the live-action film. Listening to the song "Mirai," I thought about trying to write a story with Suwa as the protagonist. *orange -future-* originally appeared as a sequel anime theatrical film to the *orange* anime adaptation, but back when the first chapter of *orange* was being serialized, this was the story I originally envisioned as the final chapter.

After everyone saved Kakeru from the accident (and his suicide), I didn't feel like showing that the future had just suddenly changed.

"If someone has been hurt, I want to pick up the pieces and help them."

I wanted to use this work to express that just a few words and sentiments such as this won't suddenly make someone okay. Mending a deeply broken heart takes time.

I wanted to put some time between the conclusion of the series and when I would draw a special chapter showing what happened ten years in the future.
(I was tempted to actually wait ten years...)

Changing the protagonist from Naho to Suwa meant that I could now draw the future I had been imagining.

I think many people have probably asked, "What am I living for?"

I think maybe hearing people express their gratitude helps you appreciate your own existence and worth. No matter what, if you pick up something someone dropped and return it to them, or return something they lost, they'll say, "Thank you."

When people express their gratitude, they may want to say, "You being here saved me," but saying something like that is difficult. But I think that "Thank you" shares a similar meaning.

"Thank you" = "Because you were here, I was saved."

So whenever someone says, "Thank you," please interpret the meaning in this way.

And, if someone does help you, please say, "Thank you." No matter what it was, those helpers in this world are precious, indeed.

I am grateful for everyone I have met through *orange*.

Thank you very much.

Ichigo Takano

Let's meet again in Volume 7! 高野苺

orange
I ALWAYS ...
THOUGHT HIS BACK WAS SO LARGE.
HEY, TAKA-CHAN...
SUWA AND I HAVE STARTED DATING.
I'll bet Suwa's happy.
OH... YEAH.
HE CRIED.
I can just picture his smile.

He's always...
liked you, Naho.
SORRY I'M LATE!
NO PROBLEM. I JUST GOT HERE MYSELF.
AND ANYWAY, IT'S STILL FIFTEEN MINUTES EARLY.
THANK YOU...
FOR WAITING FOR ME...
ALL THIS TIME.

SEVEN SEAS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

orange —future— VOLUME 6

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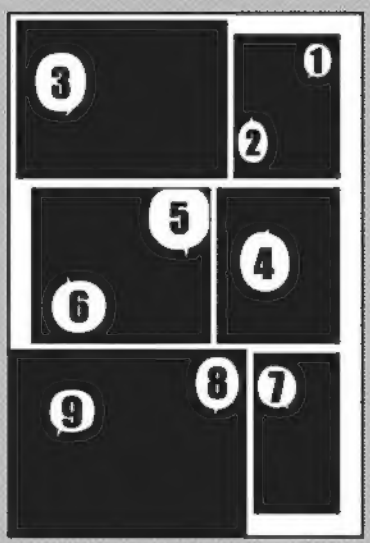
READING DIRECTIONS

This book reads from ***right to left***, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get the hang of it! Have fun!!



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The long-awaited sequel to the Eisner-nominated *orange*!

Experience the world of *orange* from a whole new perspective, as the fate of the present and future timelines unfolds from the point of view of the ever-cheerful third wheel, Suwa Hiroto. Reuniting years later in college, Suwa and Naho's lives have been forever scarred by their experiences in high school. They say time heals all wounds, but sometimes, time is not enough.

TEEN

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